

THE EFFECT OF SELF-ASSESSMENT ON INEXPERIENCED EFL STUDENTS' WRITING DURING REVISION

by

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this thesis is to investigate the influence of self-assessment on the writing of inexperienced EFL Libyan university students' writing. Data was collected from one hundred fourth year students majoring in English. The essays were each 300 words in length. The students were divided into experimental and control groups and 40 essays (20 from each group) were selected for analysis. The study uses a pre-self-assessment/post-self-assessment comparison of two groups of writers, drawing on revision taxonomies and models as a theoretical basis for the research.

The key research instrument was a self-assessment sheet which asked students to assess the content, organisation and language of their essays. Students were asked to revise their writing after using the self-assessment sheet. In addition to the self-assessment sheet, a post-study feedback form was given to elicit the students' attitudes towards the use of self-assessment to guide their revision of writing. Further, a questionnaire completed by Libyans in the UK was also used in this study to elicit key contextual information about the writing context of the study.

The results of the study showed that the writers in the experimental group who used self-assessment to guide their revision made surface and meaning revisions which improved their revised drafts. While the writers in the control group also revised their writing, they tended to limit themselves primarily to a few surface revisions. The result of the study demonstrated that the majority of students in the experimental group had a positive attitude towards the incorporation of self-assessment in EFL writing classrooms in Libya.

While there are limitations mainly due to the political and social climate at the time the research was conducted, this thesis demonstrates to some extent the important role of using self-assessment in developing students' writing skills. It also puts forward the view that inexperienced writers can revise their writing for meaning, if given the opportunity to think about and reflect on their writing. The thesis contributes to the growing awareness in EFL countries of the need for a student-centred learning environment where students are able to be autonomous and less dependent on their teachers. A further contribution of this thesis lies in the specific suggestions it makes for writing teachers in a Libyan educational context.

DEDICATION

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my father Amer, my mother Nageya, my husband Najib and my children Aryaam, Alaa and Abdelmajed who greatly shaped my life

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As the role of writing in EFL learning increases, the students' ability to self-assess their EFL writing skills also becomes progressively more important (Oscarson, 2009, p.14).

1.3 Background

Most schools and universities in Libya are 'teacher-centered' and have an 'examination oriented teaching culture' (Pennington, 1995, p.707). These two characteristics have led to a product-oriented (Pennington, 1996) educational system which has in turn influenced the way in which many of the language skills, especially writing, are taught. Most Libyan students struggle to compose texts in English independently and consider writing one of the most difficult skills to master (see Chapter 4, section 4.2). This is unsurprising and supported by research - Chamot (2005) highlights that writing in a second language is potentially one of the most difficult skills for learners to achieve a competent level of communication.

As an English teacher in the Libyan education system, I have observed that for many Libyan university students, writing is considered one of the most difficult courses to complete and is often the only obstacle to gaining a good grade in English. Students commonly prefer courses on grammar, phonetics and reading. Anecdotally, when students are asked what they find most difficult about writing, many say that they are unsure of how to start, what to include, and how to improve. Additionally, being unaware of the criteria used in evaluating their essays, learners continually hold teachers responsible for the low marks they receive and blame them for being too strict and harsh. Furthermore, as the teacher is the only source of information, students depend entirely upon their guidance and assessment. This consequently deprives learners of the opportunity to evaluate their writing critically and analytically (Wei & Chen, 2004). Teachers themselves struggle with the teaching of writing skills and marking pieces of writing work. Wang (2007, p.7) identifies marking as 'a monster of some sort' as teachers of English as a foreign language (referred to hereafter as 'EFL' in this thesis) are perpetually lamenting the immense effort they exert in writing classes and when marking, which they consider to be met with very little achievement on the learners' part.

Globally, in the 1970s, there was a discernible change in the way in which writing was taught in an EFL classroom. The arrival of this approach, known as the 'Process Approach', allowed teachers of EFL, the opportunity to review and react to student writing during the process of composition, seeing the exercise as a work in progress as opposed to a finished product (Zamel, 1985). This change in understanding meant that a piece of writing was not viewed as a single-action activity that begins with topic assignment and ends with the handing in of that particular piece of work. This extremely important shift in the perception of the writing process meant that the focus moved from final product to the process of writing. This view was developed and nurtured by advocates such as Emig (1971), Elbow (1973), Murray (1978) and (Zamel, 1982). Unfortunately, this process approach to writing did not fully reach the Libyan education system which is still very much entrenched in the product-oriented approach to the teaching of writing.

The process of writing (discussed in detail in Chapter 2), as defined by (Murray, 1985), is made up of three distinct stages: prewriting, writing and rewriting. The first stage covers all activities that occur before writing, including research and the generation of ideas. The second stage is the action of creating the first draft; students at this stage typically focus on formulating their ideas (the content of their writing) and the best way to organise their ideas. The final stage is revision, where the content is revised, typically paying more attention to the language used and the overall organisation of the writing.

The rewriting or revision stage of the writing process has often been viewed as challenging for many EFL learners. Tong (2007, p.53) states that '[e]diting and revision are integral to [the] writing process, whereas many EFL learners fail to fulfill these tasks successfully because they merely focus on grammatical issues in the written work but neglect semantic and structural problems'. One of the main challenges for many learners is the difficulty in knowing what to revise in their own writing. Learner writers typically adopt an editing approach, revising at surface level, issues such as spelling, punctuation and vocabulary, and tend not to use this opportunity to revise the content and organisation of the essay (Perl, 1979; Sommers, 1980). In most instances, in an Arab classroom, the teachers do not ask for more than a single draft of a piece of writing (Halimah, 1991; questionnaire results, Chapter 4 of this thesis) 99This results in students not realising the importance of being able to plan, formulate and revise their work (Al-Hazmi & Scholfield 2007, p. 238). In a study which investigates writing processes and strategies that Libyan university students use when writing in both Arabic and English, El-Aswad (2002, p. 216) indicates that 'it was clear that these

subjects, like other students, had never been taught how to write, or how to revise'. He states that Libyan students are not able to revise because they do not know how to revise and also points out that 'all the subjects admitted that revision is an important part of writing but they also admitted that they had not been trained or taught how to revise in either language during their pre-college academic life' (p. 223). This finding is in line with some of the findings that have been derived from the answers to my questionnaire related to the teaching of writing in Libya. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Given that the situation in Libya is one which is focused on the product-oriented approach to writing and where Libyan students appear to not have been taught how to revise, the present study hopes to address this issue by investigating the use of self-assessment as a technique to guide EFL learners through the revision process. Self-assessment (discussed in section 4) is defined by Claxton (1995, p. 339) as 'the ability to recognise good work as such, and to correct one's performance so that better work is produced'. This study aims to show that the revision stage of the writing process is an ideal stage for the application of self-assessment for the improvement of the final written product. It hopes to demonstrate that this is particularly important and helpful for inexperienced writers such as the Libyan students who participated in this study.

1.4 Motivation, rationale and aims of the study

As an EFL teacher in an English Department in a university in Libya, I am often struck by the fact that most Libyan students, despite being taught English writing for many years, do not achieve proficiency in writing by the time they graduate from the English Department. I believe that this problem stems from the way in which writing is taught in Libya where many teachers of writing are struggling to implement new and different techniques in their teaching. Suwaed (2011, p.11) points out that 'the courses of teacher education in Libya depend on theory rather than practice and the Libyan national universities do not provide pre-service or in-service training for university teachers'. This is an issue because in teaching 'subject matter knowledge alone is not enough' (Hashweh, 2005, p.279). This concern is not restricted to second language teaching exclusively, and there is evidence that even English-speaking countries omitted to include specific training in teaching the skill of writing (Matsuda, 2003). In the Libyan context, it is often the case that a MA or PhD degree is assumed to be an adequate qualification to practice as a teacher. University level teachers in Libya are frequently left to design their own courses based on their own knowledge and

experience. In doing so, the teacher adopts what they believe to be the appropriate approach to teaching, encompassing all elements of the course including teaching material, classroom tasks and learning activities for the students (Suwaed, 2011).

Given that there is minimum guidance for teachers on how to teach writing and given that students' proficiency levels in writing are low despite years of instruction, looking at how writing is taught and how it could be improved is the broad topic of this thesis. Within this somewhat broad field, looking more specifically at how students could become involved in independent learning, given the current over dependence on teachers in the Libyan context, proved a natural extension of this thesis. This thesis therefore hopes to demonstrate that self-assessment is an effective way to improve the quality of writing among EFL Libyan students.

Additionally, the topic of self-assessment itself appears worthy of further investigation because in comparison to peer assessment and teacher assessment, research on self-assessment seems fairly sparse. Considerable research has been conducted on the effects of peer assessment and teacher assessment on writing (Matsuno, 2009; Birjandi and Siyyari, 2010; Diab, 2010; Srichanyachon, 2011; Larsari, 2012; to name a few). In comparison, there seems to be very little research on the effectiveness of self-assessment carried out in the process of writing in the EFL classroom. It is against this backdrop that I chose to carry out my research on a group of Libyan students to test the value of self-assessment in this particular EFL context. As far as I know, research of this nature has not been conducted thus far in Libya. In the process of studying self-assessment as a technique to enable students to improve their writing, the study will address some of the issues highlighted above about students' lack of awareness of the criteria used in the evaluation of their writing and explore some of the issues that stem from the teacher-dominated writing classroom. It will consider if self-assessment is a good way to raise learners' awareness of common mistakes in their writing. Consequently, this thesis aims to put forward the view that the process of self-assessment could help EFL learners to improve their writing. Engaging in self-assessment will also have the added benefit of invariably increasing learner autonomy. As Blue (1988, p.101) states: "[a] deeper involvement of learners in assessment and needs analysis is bound to enhance learning".

This thesis supports the view that 'assessment should be part of instruction, not apart from it' (Popham, 1997, p. 3). The research investigation in this thesis therefore utilises self-

assessment as a revision technique in the process of writing and examines its effect on the writing EFL learners' writing. The main aims of the thesis are:

1. To investigate if there is any improvement to the writing of inexperienced EFL students if self-assessment is used during the revision process.

Two groups were investigated in order to shed light on this aim. The experimental group was asked to revise their writing according to the instructions set out in a self-assessment sheet I designed. The control group was asked to revise their writing independently. A comparison of these two groups would demonstrate if there is any improvement to the writing of students who had used the self-assessment sheet during the writing process.

2. To determine if the attitudes of students related to the use of self-assessment in EFL writing are positive or negative.

A post-study feedback form (see Appendix 8) was given to the seventy students of the experimental group to investigate their attitudes towards using the self-assessment sheet to revise their writing. This step would have pedagogical implications for the classroom practices in Libya for the teaching of writing.

1.2.1 Research questions

In order to meet the aims set out above, the following research questions have been put forward:

Research question 1:

Do inexperienced EFL students who self-assess their writing engage in revision more than those who do not self-assess?

To address this question, the number of students who revised any of the elements in the self-assessment sheet (i.e. content, organisation and language), in both the control and the experimental groups, was counted and quantitatively analysed (this is reported in Chapter 4 of the thesis).

Research question 2:

Does self-assessment enable inexperienced EFL students to improve the quality of their revised writing?

To answer this question I analysed the types of revisions made by the experimental group that improved the quality of their revised essays in terms of content, organisation and language. The data obtained was subject to a detailed analysis of the quality and type of revision made by students.

Research question 3:

What are the students' opinions of using the self-assessment technique as a revision strategy for essay writing?

A short and simple post-study feedback form was completed by students to obtain their opinion regarding the use of self-assessment as a method to improve their writing. Results were derived by counting the number of students who found the self-assessment method useful as opposed to those who did not.

1.3 Definitions of terms

For the purposes of this study and to ensure clarity, it is useful to set out the definitions of the following terms which are frequently used in this thesis.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL):

Oscarson (2009, p.4) states that 'English as a foreign language is in most cases a language learned in the country where the language is not spoken, and a foreign language is acquired through teaching, sometimes without any contact with native speakers outside the classroom.'

This study uses the term EFL, i.e. English as a foreign language, in the sense of the study of English by non-native speakers living in a non-English-speaking environment (Random House Unabridged English Dictionary, 1997). The students in Libya fall in the EFL category.

Self-assessment:

Self-assessment refers to a process in which a student engages in a systematic review of performance, whether oral or written, usually for the purpose of improving future performance. It may involve comparison with standard, established criteria or it may be a simple description of the performance (Bickers, 1988).

The term self-assessment is used in the present study to refer specifically to the use of a sheet (see Appendix 6) including a list of criteria which I provided to learners. This was then used to assess their performance and to revise their work according to the criteria set out.

Mistakes vs. Errors:

The present study focuses on mistakes and not errors in the language section of the self-assessment sheet (the other two sections are content and organisation). A mistake is the misuse of language as a result of the lack of attention, fatigue or anxiety on the part of the learner. An error, conversely, is a systematic misuse of the language caused by a lack of knowledge. Krashen's (1981) 'monitor' hypothesis provides a significant depth of insight into the nature of both mistakes and errors. The basic claim of this hypothesis is that the language that one has subconsciously acquired determines one's utterances, whereas the language that we consciously learn is employed for editing in situations where the learner has enough time to edit, is focused on form, and knows the rule. This conscious "editor" is termed the monitor. In light of this, the presence of a mistake can result from insufficient time for editing, or because of a lack of focus on form, whereas an error can be defined as the misuse of language as a result of a lack of knowledge on the learner's part. In this thesis, I am looking at mistakes rather than errors when students revise their writing using the criteria 'language' as set out in the self-assessment sheet.

Revision:

Fitzgerald (1988, p.124) defines revision as an ongoing, recursive process where '[c]hanges might affect meaning or they [i.e. students] might merely fix features such as spelling. A writer may revise plans for a composition before any words appear on paper, may change words or sentences while putting them on paper, or may go back to make changes after a draft is finished'.

Dix (2006) explains that Fitzgerald's definition identifies the revision process as a collection of sub-processes. These include deletion, addition, correction, substitution, editing and proof reading and the actions of rewording and reordering. These processes can be seen as connected competencies within the composition process. Most studies on revision, with the exception of Bridwell (1980) who considered multiple levels of revision, have divided this process into two types, which are often described by different terms. Murray (1978) distinguishes these as internal and external revision; Faigley and Witte (1981) differentiates them as processes which involve meaning-preserving changes or meaning-altering changes (corresponding to meaning and surface changes as used in this study). Yet others refer to these as local and global revision (Wallace and Hayes 1991; Fontaine et. al, 2013). In contrast, Bridwell (1980) identified seven linguistic levels and specified the operations that

may happen during revision (discussed in chapter 3). Bridwell's more robust system identifies multiple levels of revision which are useful in identifying the complex nature of revision in writing.

For this study, Faigley and Witte's taxonomy of revision and Bridwell's scheme of revision were adapted and combined for the analysis, as they enabled the most comprehensive approach to the study of revision (see 3.8.1 for further detail).

1.4 Scope of the study

The participants in the study are 100 fourth year university EFL learners majoring in English Language. They were recommended for the study by their teachers, based on the student's ability to write and that they had been enrolled in English classes in years one, two and three at the same university. Furthermore, fourth year students were selected for their ability to produce a piece of multi-paragraph writing, whereas most students of other years usually are only able to write a one-paragraph composition.

The present study is only applied to a single writing genre, that of explanation and description (i.e. expository). This specific genre was selected to reduce variables in the study that could arise from the students selecting their own genres. This decision is supported by the work of Crowhurst and Piche (1979) who discovered that the genre of writing had an effect on the complexity of syntax in the written work of students. By confining the genre to expository writing, this would mean all the students would be producing writing of similar complexity.

Self-assessment in the present study is used as a revision procedure in the process of writing. This is an important point to note because typically studies on self-assessment (reviewed in Chapter 2) are used to evaluate student writing. In this case it is used in a formative way. A range of specific criteria was chosen to be used in the self-assessment sheet. These are content, organisation and language and they were selected based the emphasis given to these elements in the English language writing curriculum the participants in this present study are enrolled on (further information about the course and participants can be found in Chapter 3, sections 3.3 & 3.4).

To understand the methodology and subsequent results of the present study, it is quite useful to understand the content of Libya in terms of the history of teaching English, the new educational system in Libya, and how English language is taught there.

1.5 History of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Libya

The history of the teaching of English language in Libya needs to be contextualised within the political, social, and cultural climate of the country. Prior to the mid 1980's, learning English was a compulsory part of the national curriculum from the age of 10 up until the completion of secondary school. However, in response to a combination of political and socio-cultural issues, both the learning and teaching of English were entirely prohibited in 1986. A campaign by the government attempted to remove all 'western influences' from the country as a response to American sanctions on Libya. This had a profound effect on the educational structure of the country as well as on those employed to teach English as tutors. Students were forced to wholly disregard the learning of foreign languages.

The negative effects of removing the teaching of English from the Libyan syllabus was evaluated by government departments overseeing education in the country in 1992 and moves to reintroduce English into the system began. Relations between Libya and the West were improving and teaching English as a foreign language became more of a necessity. Furthermore, as a result of development in business and tourism, the need for graduate level English speakers increased. It was subsequently decided by the Libyan Committee for Higher Education that the learning of languages should be introduced and encouraged at all levels. The teaching of English in schools was officially reintroduced in 1997. However, problems arose due to the fact that teachers were no longer able to teach English with the same level of proficiency. Textbooks had changed and the approach to teaching English had developed to include new methodologies and cultural characteristics. Libyan teachers of English had not developed their knowledge in line with these changes and were no longer confident in their abilities to teach English. In an attempt to solve this problem new training courses were developed, but Libyan teachers of English found it difficult to move on from old methodologies and many retained their old methods.

Currently, the system in Libya offers English language teaching in primary schools from the age of nine years onwards up to university level. It is therefore possible for all graduating Libyan students to have 10 years' experience of English (Imssalem, 2001, p.9). As the entire educational system of Libya was overhauled in the mid 1990's, the government facilitated and actively encouraged students to further their education overseas in all fields of academia and the number of overseas students reached 71,000 in 2009 (this was the last available statistic due to the subsequent civil unrest from 2010 onwards). This strategy on the part of

the government opened the door for the successful and proficient learning of English by Libyan students.

1.5.1 The EFL system in Libya

Prior to the removal of English from the Libyan curriculum, English was taught with an emphasis on grammar and comprehension. This method is known as Grammar-Translation (Suwaed, 2011; Shihiba, 2011) whereby teaching is typically oral and based around methods that focused on grammar, pronunciation, the recalling of vocabulary and the ability to read aloud. Students were taught through the use of the Arabic language to explain and to understand in English. However, when English was reintroduced into the education system, it was done with the benefit of a new curriculum. The new curriculum comprised a number of textbooks entitled 'English for Libya' and at each proficiency level, teaching was interactive and involved the teaching of different language skills. This is commonly known as the communicative language teaching method and was considered as a significant improvement from the previous system. The use of English by both teachers and students was encouraged under the new curriculum as 'the aim is for the students to communicate effectively and fluently with each other and to make talking in English a regular activity' (Macfarlane, 2000, p.5).

1.5.2 The teacher of EFL in Libya

As noted earlier, Libyan teachers of English appear to have found it difficult to incorporate the new curriculum into their teaching for several reasons. For one, the design of the curriculum was drawn up entirely by policy makers and did not include any input from the teachers themselves. Tutors received inadequate preparation for the implementation of the new syllabus, which was limited to attending a week-long conference in which they were given the necessary information and were introduced to the new textbooks. The seminar was run by ELT inspectors who had received some training by the textbook publisher, but the seminar did not fully equip English teachers with the most modern techniques of EFL teaching (Sawani, 2009). It only promoted the curriculum.

Research suggests that although teaching methods and ideologies have improved, the techniques of the teacher do not seem to reflect this improvement. The General Education Committee (2008, p.24-43) expected students to acquire an ability to develop critical thinking, yet the fact that many teachers still use the traditional grammar translation method

of repetition and recalling from memory means that the educational system still faces many challenges.

The question which then arises is namely; why are Libyan teachers of English so fixed on the old methods of teaching? The obvious answer seems to be the gap in their teaching education during the time of the foreign language ban. However, as Latiwish (2003) discusses, it may also be due to the way English as a foreign language is perceived by Libyan society as a whole. The grammar translation method is widely perceived as the traditional method, and therefore the correct method of teaching; indeed, the teachers themselves learnt English in this way.

The traditional method is more familiar to them by virtue of other aspects of their life experiences, such as the way the Quran or traditional Arabic poetry is learned and understood. In addition, an interactive classroom environment is not common in any subject, apart from the English language classroom. Vandewalle (2006,p. 40-41) wrote that ‘while educational development is still a priority for the government, the educational programmes in Libya suffer from limited and changeable curricula, a lack of qualified teachers (especially Libyan teachers), and a strong tendency to learn by rote rather than by reasoning, a characteristic of Arab education in general.’

Having considered some of the background to the Libyan education system and the manner in which English is taught in Libya, the next few sections will look more closely at writing in an EFL context.

1.6 Challenges of writing for EFL learners

Writing is a multifaceted discipline. Sadler (1989, p. 123-125) describes how the complexity arises as many variables combine to determine a student’s ability. There is no linear way of learning a language and students develop in many dimensions simultaneously. The linguistic skills involved cannot be systematically taught and ticked off a list as ‘prerequisite learning cannot be conceptualised as neatly packaged units of skills or knowledge’. In order to write an essay, a student has to create and combine ideas, utilise knowledge of structure and vocabulary, and employ many other skills to formulate a complete piece of writing. This can be challenging even in one’s first language and even more so, in a second language (Nunan, 1988; Nunan, 1991). The manner in which ideas are expressed through writing requires a decision-making process for the writer; in that they must first choose their idea, and

subsequently decide how to convey it through words. This is undoubtedly a more demanding process for a second language writer. Cumming (2001,p.5) remarks that when organising ideas into a piece of writing, second language writers 'seem to devote much attention while they write to decisions about the form of the second language or to finding resources such as appropriate words'.

Weigle (2002, p.36) notes that this challenge can be such that the content and organisation of many EFL and ESL writers' work will suffer, whilst the writer struggles with the language itself and that the very nature of the effort involved, can affect the outcome of the writing. A study by Roca de Larios, Manchón and Murphy (2006, p. 102-110) highlights potential conflicts arising from the differences between first and second languages. They state that the belief that the 'L2 constrains the formulation of ideas may be regarded as a sweeping generalization'. However, despite this viewpoint the study acknowledged that it did take second language students two times longer to formulate ideas in their L2 writing than in their L1 work and that the time taken was not affected by language proficiency, but perhaps by the nature of the languages themselves.

Writing is an essential tool in the learning of a new language. Linnarud (1986, p.120) indicates that 'writing is an important integrative and creative task which should have a prominent place in language teaching and testing'. One issue that surfaces in connection with learning to write in a second language relates to the students' grasp of the more formal elements of the language in question, such as vocabulary and grammar. It is extremely difficult for an EFL/ESL student to deliver a piece of writing at the same level of proficiency as a native speaker of that language of similar age and position. Linnarud (1986) studied a group of Swedish students and discovered that, on the whole, their essays in English tended to include more repetition, were shorter and used more limited vocabulary than first language speakers of the same age. The study also notes that the approach of the native speakers to the topic tended to be more original in thought. Linnarud (1986), therefore, argues that it would not be reasonable to focus only on the accuracy of the writing when judging the ability of second language students and that both the method and content should be considered when judging success.

In Libya, developing a good level of proficiency in English through school and university education is important. Al-Khasawneh (2010) illustrates that the majority of international contracts relating to trade, tourism, the media, politics, technology, are completed and

conveyed in English. It is therefore vital that Libyans in these sectors develop the ability to write and speak English proficiently. The skill of writing is of particular importance, especially since English is widely used as an international means of communication. Zamel (1983) ascertains that the writing process is a 'non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning' (p.165). The skill of writing is complex and difficult (Graham, Harris, & Mason, 2005), partly due to its inherent complexities which as Wall & Petrovsky (1981, p.53) states 'range from mechanical control to creativity, with good grammar, knowledge of subject matter, awareness of stylistic conventions and various mysterious factors in between'. The ability to write is an ability to develop ideas and to convey these ideas with clarity and accuracy. It is a challenging task in one's first language, but even more so in a foreign language as numerous aspects such as content, organisation, grammar, punctuation, purpose, audience and vocabulary must be combined and balanced to correctly convey the writer's thought process. As a skill, it facilitates new ways of thinking and allows the writer's thoughts to be studied and ideas to be assessed. In a foreign language, the ability to master writing in such a way as to be able to achieve this goal proves genuine fluency (Abu-Rass, 2001). A major element of the challenge of writing fluently is that by writing, one is creating a contextualised idea that must be conveyed to a reader who is unknown to the writer. In the EFL classroom in Libya, these hurdles become apparent as teachers attempt to impart this skill to their pupils. We must however acknowledge that there are unavoidable circumstances which impede the effective teaching of writing. Often, time spent on the language is restricted to a few sessions in the classroom with large numbers of students. This means that there is pressure on teachers to impart information quickly and efficiently to learners. Learners themselves find it preferable to engage in modes of learning which are lecturer-centered and in which they receive knowledge rather than interpret it (Eldokali, 2014, pp. 369-370). The education of the teachers themselves tends to be theory based and national universities do not provide consistent training for university level teachers. As Hashweh (2005, p.279) states 'subject matter knowledge alone is not enough' and although teachers have a high level of qualification, a Masters or a PhD, they have not been trained to teach English writing. In the Libyan system, a Master's or a Doctorate qualification is deemed adequate for a teacher to structure their own course, choose their own approach and provide their own material (Suwaed, 2011).

The problems that arise from this unregulated way of teaching writing are recognised and noted by Othman (2009). Often, teachers do not utilise dictation, and do not involve students in the correction of their own writing or require them to correct their spelling mistakes. From the students' perspectives, as noted by Othman (2009), their problems with writing in English arose from a lack of vocabulary, the small number of classroom activities in a limited time period, inaccurate pronunciation by teachers, lack of use of dictation and the lack of training in writing

Research indicates that the best way to teach the skill of writing is to give students control of their own work whilst the teacher becomes the reader. In this context the reader is able to then react to the piece of writing and assist in showing the student where there were problems and how to solve them. Self-assessment has been suggested as a way to improve and rate work, as supported by Schendel and O'Neill (1999, p.205), as it inspires the student to take responsibility and develop their own awareness of their writing. Self-assessment encourages 'a certain amount of rhetorical agency' and is a more beneficial way to learn. A student's self-assessment can be undertaken as an analysis or as a personal achievement test. Through the implementation of self-assessment, a student is able to recognise their own abilities, identify weak areas and develop a full understanding of where improvements are required, whilst also being able to evaluate the level of their own competency (Oscarsson, 2009).

For the purpose of the present thesis, self-assessment is considered as a tool to help students learn how to self-assess and improve their written work. This concept is new to the EFL students in the present study (see Chapter 3). By investigating the use of self-assessment in writing, the thesis attempts to address the current difficulties encountered by both teachers and students in Libya and puts forward suggestions to approach the teaching of writing in a different way (using a process approach) than is currently widespread (the product approach) in the country. This is discussed in the next chapter, Chapter 4.

1.7 Importance of the overall study

The objective of this study is to provide an account of how the teaching of writing in a country like Libya may be improved. The study is of particular relevance as the key lies in the implementation of self-assessment as a means of effective revision during the writing process, especially since such a method appears to not exist in the Libyan system. The use of self-assessment enables the student to become aware of mistakes in language and grammar that occur most frequently and also allows them to address issues in more complex aspects

such as content and organisation. The study illustrates how, by bringing self-assessment into the classroom environment, students are able to engage in this process effectively. This method will also draw attention to the role of the teacher in the teaching of writing. Where previously the role of the teacher in a typical Libyan classroom was one of 'regulating and controlling all classroom discourse practices, which effectively translates into the control of what the student should or should not say or do' (Eldokali, 2014, p.375), the role of the teacher in the process writing classroom is one of helping students develop an independence in their writing. It is hoped that this study will shed light on how writing could potentially be taught in a Libyan classroom.

1.8 Organisation of the thesis

This chapter (**Chapter 1**) places the study in context and states the motivation and aims of the thesis. It also explains the nature of the present research problem, and the possible contributions of this overall study.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of approaches of teaching writing. Given that the focus of this thesis is on writing, it concentrates on two main approaches. Firstly, the product approach, which is the most common approach used in Libya to teach writing, and secondly, the process approach, where issues such as revision, are brought into focus. Theoretically, the chapter discusses the cognitive approach to writing, where revision is a key element, and reviews theorists who come from the cognitivist tradition.

This chapter also focuses on research about the revision stage of the writing process. It therefore provides an overview of the stages involved in the process of writing. It also reviews studies investigating how experienced and inexperienced writers revise. This review, in particular, helped me position the results of the present study, which is concerned primarily with inexperienced writers' (as demonstrated by the low proficiency levels of the writers investigated in this thesis) revisions.

Additionally, this chapter provides an overview of research carried out on assessment and self-assessment. It explores the definition of self-assessment and the benefits of self-assessment. The chapter also highlights the use of self-assessment for evaluative and learning purposes. Studies have been conducted to evaluate both purposes and these are reviewed briefly. The study reported in this thesis extends current research in self-assessment by investigating the learning purposes of self-assessment.

In **chapter 3**, I discuss the issues that were important in the development of the research instruments for the study – the writing assignment, the questionnaire, the self-assessment sheet, and the feedback form. It explores how the self-assessment sheet was designed to address the lower levels of proficiency of some of the learners and what the consequences are of such an instrument. There will be a discussion on the value of translating the items of the self-assessment sheet to Arabic to make the task easier to accomplish for some of the learners. There is also a narrative on the data collection procedures which took place over a two-month period in three universities in Libya. I will detail the way in which the data was collected and subsequently reduced for analysis. The chapter will highlight the way in which revision was analysed and the model that was used for the study. It will discuss, using examples from the students' writing, how revisions were codified, evaluated and how conclusions were drawn from the analysis.

The chapter also highlights and discusses some of the limitations of the methodology. Part of this discussion will discuss, in quite great detail, the reasons for the lack of piloting of some of the research instruments, as the study was conducted in the most volatile political environment in Libya. In fact, the data was collected just before the outbreak of civil war in the country. The impact of these limitations, the lack of piloting and the shortcomings as a direct result of this will be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 reports the results of this study. The chapter presents the results of the questionnaire, the result of the comparison of first and revised drafts of students' writing from both the experimental group and the control group in terms of content, organisation and language. The results of the questionnaire are used to help interpret and support some of the essay comparison analysis. This chapter also reports the results concerning the post-study feedback form distributed to the 70 students of the experimental group, for their views regarding implementation of the self-assessment technique in their writing.

Chapter 5 concludes the study. The chapter presents the discussion and conclusion of the study in terms of the research questions and more broadly in terms of writing pedagogy. It evaluates the research in terms of its relative strengths and weaknesses. It also provides some suggestions for how the study may be improved. This is particularly focussed on an improvement in the methodology. It also explores the implications of the research for the teaching of second language writing using the process approach in Libya. It highlights some

of the findings from the questionnaire to frame the discussion. It concludes with suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

WRITING: REVISION AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of previous research on the approaches to the teaching writing, revision and self-assessment. These are key theoretical issues which form the basis of the research in the thesis. The discussion includes an exploration of the writing process and focuses on the cognitive models of writing, namely Flower and Hayes (1981) and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987). The importance of discussing these two models lies in their potential to explain how writers revise their texts. This is an important consideration in this thesis, as I am investigating how inexperienced writers revise their texts. Additionally, the chapter reviews research on self-assessment by highlighting the ways in which self-assessment has been used in classroom. This includes a discussion on definitions, an exploration of typical self-assessment forms and techniques. This latter review is important in providing the necessary background to inform the discussion on the development on the research tools in the following chapter.

2.2 Product and process approaches to the teaching of writing

This section considers the two writing approaches central to the present study i.e. the product approach and the process approach. The product approach is widely used in Libya for the reasons we considered in Chapter 1 of the thesis. The discussion will provide more detail about its use in Libya. The discussion on the process approach is central to this thesis, as the current research is an attempt to consider the implications of introducing process writing to the Libyan writing classroom. This is done through investigating the influence of using a self-assessment sheet to encourage revision during the writing process. The ultimate aim of the thesis is to consider if there are pedagogical advantages to introducing the process approach to the teaching of writing in Libya.

2.2.1 Product approach

The product approach to teaching writing in an EFL context is a long-established, text based method that is used by teachers in some countries around the world (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). This is the approach which is commonly used in the writing classroom in Libya (Suwaed, 2011).

The product approach to writing is centred on the writing of texts with little attention paid to the writing process or the development a writer undergoes in the process of producing a piece of work. It is known as such, because the focus is on the final 'product', that is to say the essay or piece of text handed in at the end of a lesson is the most important element of writing. The correct use of vocabulary, grammar and a strong knowledge of linguistics combined with the use of cohesive devices, writing quality and structure are definitive of the product approach (Furneaux, 1999; Tribble, 2003). It is quite common to use this approach to writing particularly for texts which do not require any kind of argumentation, for example, writing business letters or memos or other types of short, professional writing. It may also be used for purely assessment purposes, particularly where there are large numbers of students. Typically, the emphasis in a product approach to writing is to measure the written products against what they have learnt about writing in the classroom.

There are different versions of the product-approach to writing. At one end of the spectrum, the focus of the writing is on the final product. This tends to lead to the act of writing becoming a test of linguistic memory and an exercise in the correct use of grammar and vocabulary, resulting in a highly polished final text that displays the student's knowledge of the language (McDonough and Show, 2003, p.57). At the other extreme, Pincas (1982), cited in Badger and White (2000, p.153) indicates that writing comprises of four stages. These are described as familiarisation, controlled writing, guided writing and finally independent writing. This approach is, as Nunan (1999, p.272) describes, 'consistent with sentence level structuralist linguistics and bottom-up processing'. The teacher's role is to give students a model text, guided exercises and students are expected to correct errors before the final 'perfect' product is presented. The emphasis is on the product, but there is a step-by-step controlled approach to the production of this product.

In the Libyan context, the product approach is typically used at one of these ends of the spectrum (the questionnaire study reported in Chapter 4 will support these observations) where the main emphasis is on correctness and the accurate use of grammar and vocabulary. Many teachers use grammar to teach writing and they test for grammar when they assess writing. In her study, Suwaed (2011, p.51) investigated the writing approaches used by teachers in Libya and in her discussion of the product approach, she indicates that '[d]ue to the assumptions that the teachers have about grammar and the importance of writing correct grammatical sentences, most writing teachers in Libya select textbooks that are organised around [a] selection of grammatical structures and sentence patterns to be learnt'. The focus

on grammatically correct writing at the sentence level however, can stunt students' abilities to write longer texts. Additionally, the classroom environment may possibly limit opportunities to interact or investigate the communication of language, which in the long run could possibly result in less effective learning. This grammar-focused product approach generally does not take into account that the ability to write well relies on much more than being able to write a correct sentence (Hedge, 2000, p.10). Matsuda (2003, p.19) points out that this type of sentence level grammar work does not often result in students writing unique sentences or writing fluently. It is however the approach used in Libya (some of the reasons were considered in Chapter 1) and provides impetus for the current study which seeks to consider if a different approach to writing instruction in Libya might be more useful for learners.

In the next section, I will discuss the process approach to writing and compare it with the product approach. I will also consider some of the benefits this approach may have for students of writing in Libya.

2.2.2 Process approach

In the late 1970s and the 1980s, the attention to composition studies had moved away from the product, with its emphasis on textual features and rhetorical form. Researchers from several philosophical and methodological directions began to examine the writing processes behind the production of text (Matsuda, 2003).

Particularly in the 1980s, a number of research studies were conducted to explore the complex nature of composition writing by L1 writers. This approach views writing as a problem-solving activity, requiring skills of assimilation, interpretation and formulation of ideas and individualised opinion. The process approach to writing is considered as an effective instrument in the process of learning (Hedge, 1993). It is far from being a simple skill that is used to copy language into symbols. It demands thinking, discovery and intellectual effort. In this approach to writing, the focus is on the writer and the strategies used during the process of writing (White & Arndt, 1991).

Prior to his three-stage writing process model (prewriting-writing-rewriting) developed in 1985, Murray (1978) divided the process of writing into three main stages emphasizing the cognitive processes involved in writing:

- Prevision, which refers to what takes place before writing
- Vision, which is the actual process of writing the first draft
- Revision, which involves reconsideration of what has been written

Many studies were conducted on the different stages of the process of writing, including time spent in the pre-writing stage (Emig, 1971; Mischel, 1974; Stallard, 1974) and the planning stage (Bridwell, 1980; Matsuhashi, 1981; Wall and Petrovsky, 1981). Most research (Witte, 1985; Silva, 1993; Zamel, 1983) conducted on the pre-writing and planning stages report a common finding, which is that unlike inexperienced writers, experienced writers spend more time in both stages.

This approach to the teaching of writing emphasises the process of writing; the students thoughts and actions as they write become as important as the finished text, or as Tribble (2003, p.38) states, ‘the focus shifts from the text to the writer’. In this approach, the teacher’s role also changes, from a source of knowledge to that of a guide. The teacher assists the students in generating independent ideas, showing them how to collect information to produce a final text through a five stage writing process comprising the actions of prewriting, composition, drafting, revision and editing (Wyse and Jones, 2001, p.172).

In the product approach, students are often passive recipients of information, whereas in the process approach, they become an active part of the learning process. Rather than glean static information from a lecture or textbook, the students become more able to develop knowledge under the guidance of the teacher, learning from their mistakes to achieve a comprehensive, long lasting improvement (Schunk, 2004, p.292). The entire dynamics of the classroom changes as the process approach no longer relies on the dominant voice of the teacher relaying information but instead can be structured around activities such as brainstorming, the organisation of ideas, drafting and revision (Richards and Renandya, 2004, p.310). The process-based curriculum removes the emphasis from the product and places it firmly on the processes involved in writing. The first process of this process-based approach is typically a pre-writing session. This could involve brainstorming a certain topic or writing down what the students feel should be included in the exercise (Nation, 2009, p.117). This leads into the first draft or composition phase, where the students begin to develop ideas arising from the pre-writing task. This phase is usually followed by a discussion, where the students then have the opportunity to make revisions to their first draft, either in groups or

individually. The final stage (revision) involves editing before the finalised piece is handed in. Within this structure, it becomes the teacher's responsibility to assist the students with their writing, actively helping with any questions on organisation or revision. They may do this in a variety of ways including group activities, one to one discussions and peer sessions (Susser, 1994, p.36).

A study by Chanquoy and Alamargot (2002) highlights that student writers can become more skilled through further autonomy in learning and in the development of an awareness of the thought process involved in constructing a written text. Their work employs the idea of 'working memory' (Hayes, 1996; Kellogg, 1996), where one's working memory is exercised when writing and the writer during the process of writing, accumulates information that will assist them every time they write. There could be a number of steps, strategies or processes undertaken by the writer that would encourage development from a basic approach to that of an approach by a competent writer (Bransford et al, 2000; Sommers & Saltz, 2004). The study suggests that one possible way to encourage this in student learners is to introduce self-assessment, which would help to enhance student learning autonomy and thereby improve their writing ability. This is the aim of the research in this thesis.

Hyland (2003) states that the teacher's role is modified in the process approach. Rather than assisting the students to learn a series of facts, the teachers' role is to help the students construct a body of knowledge for themselves. They do not impart knowledge but provide students with the tools required to achieve autonomous learning. In other words, they now guide and facilitate. This new role requires introducing new ideas whilst simultaneously providing assistance and direction, thus enabling students to comprehend this information with relative ease. The process method therefore also provides the teacher with a valuable and ongoing learning experience. The teacher must be aware of how each stage affects the students, and be able to alter their methods accordingly in order to produce the best results.

Despite the apparent advantages of the process approach for students and teachers, this approach is considered by some as difficult. Hedge (2000, p.10) argues that although the method encourages drafts and student revisions, students still have to produce work in timed exam conditions where a multiple draft method is simply not feasible. In terms of the teachers' workload, the multiple drafts approach can also be difficult to implement effectively due to typically large classes in many EFL settings. In China, Tsui (1995) documents the case of a particular EFL Chinese teacher who was not able to implement the

approach in his teaching due to the school's grammar-based curriculum and exam policy. There are indeed challenges around the implementation of a process approach.

On the whole, the process approach is not extensively used in the teaching of English writing in Libya. There is evidence that the approach is adopted by some teachers who completed their postgraduate studies in English-speaking countries where they experienced this type of approach in their own education. In addition, some English teachers in Libya come from other countries where the process approach is more common than the product approach (Suwaed, 2011). However, Libyan teachers tend to prefer to teach in the way that they were taught themselves, using the same techniques that their teachers used. Many Libyan teachers are simply not aware that alternative methods exist. In the event that they do, they do not always have the confidence to try to implement these new ways of teaching and they believe there to be a risk associated with deviating from traditional ways. The teachers' view of their own role in the classroom also affects the way they choose to teach. For example, if they believe their primary role to be that of an assessor, it follows that they should focus on the production of grammatically-correct sentencing and the teaching method that best enables this. In addition, large class sizes and generally low language proficiency amongst students, renders collaborative tasks and group work, activities typical of a process classroom, a difficult route to take (Suwaed, 2011; Elabbar, 2011).

It is important to mention here that as far as I am aware, there is only one study which has investigated the writing process experienced by Libyan students, namely El-Aswad (2002). El-Aswad mentions that 'few studies have examined the writing processes of Arab university students, and none has been conducted on Libyan students' writing processes'. El-Aswad examines the writing processes in L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English) experienced by twelve third-year Libyan university students, as they verbalised and produced written texts in both languages. The study investigates the process and product data separately to reveal potential relationships between an individual subject's process skill and product quality in either language. Since his 2002 study, there have been other studies on student writing, but none reporting the use of the process approach. The current research will address this gap in the literature.

Having discussed the process approach to writing, it is important to mention here that since the 1960s, the process movement itself has come under the influence of many different

theoretical views to writing instruction. I have summarised the main views and how they conceptualise the writing process in Table 2.1.

Theoretical Views	View of writing
Expressivist , Elbow (1998); Murray (1985)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing as a process of self-discovery or self-expression • It emphasizes the power of the individual to construct his or her own views on a topic
Cognitive Flower & Hayes (1980); Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cognitive process of writing. Writing is seen as being:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problem solving - Goal directed - Recursive process
Social Bizzel (1992); Batholomae, (1985)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing as a social process • Connection between the individual writer and the context of the writer

Table 2.1 Views to process writing adopted from John (2005, p. 20)

Each of these views prioritises a different aspect of the writing process. The expressivists prioritised the writer and placed at the centre of the writing process the importance of allowing the writer to construct his or her own text. The cognitive view looked closely at the way in which writers composed texts and considered different ways in which writers composed and revised their texts. The social view considers writing as a contextual activity which is not produced in a vacuum, but is produced in an interaction with other factors.

In this thesis, given that the focus of the current study is on revision and how writers revise their texts, I will subscribe entirely to the cognitive view to writing. Two cognitive models which account for how writing might take place within the realm of the process approach are reviewed. These are the cognitive models proposed by Flower and Hayes (1981) and Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987) which are the two most influential models for research investigating the cognitive approach to writing. Following my review of these models, I will look more closely at revision.

2.2.2.1 Writing as a cognitive process

In general, challenges writers might encounter when they are writing arise from the writer's attempts in taking language and transferring their thoughts and emotions using this language whilst simultaneously taking into consideration what they believe are the readers expectations. Cognitive models have for the most part defined the writing process as a

problem solving one (McCutchen, Teske, & Bankston, 2008). This problem solving approach highlights the complex nature of writing and shows that a number of issues can arise in various areas such as strategy; namely the organisation of ideas, or motor plans, like the activity of typing. Those writers that are able to deal with a great number of interconnected problems are classified as skilled writers. These writers have the ability to create and order ideas relevant to the task at hand and produce sentences and paragraphs that are correct in spelling, punctuation and grammar. A skilled writer can also alter their ideas in terms of tone and wording to achieve the required effect on the reader.

Prior to research undertaken in the 1970's the process of writing was seen to be a linear process. However, developments in the subject areas of cognitive psychology and social contexts allowed many researchers to begin viewing writing as more complex and as an exercise of many recursive processes (Britton, 1970; Halliday, 1978, 1982). This new research took into consideration the entire thinking process involved in producing a piece of writing. The research concluded that composition is a complex, non-linear process that includes planning, translating and reviewing what was happening in a recursive way (Flower and Hayes, 1981). In the following section, I will review two key cognitive models that have been put forward to account for the ways in which writers compose their texts. While the discussion is meant to provide a comprehensive, but brief, overview of the models, it also highlights the importance of revision as a crucial step in the writing process.

The Flower and Hayes model

The Flower and Hayes cognitive model of writing composition developed from a number of previous studies that utilised new methodologies such as ethnographies, case studies and surveys. Rohman's 1965 study, generated the idea of pre-writing finding that the writing process was made up of stages defined as pre-writing, writing and re-writing where the pre-writing stage involved thinking and planning. Emig (1971) found, using protocol analysis, that planning actually occurs both before and during writing and was one of the first to see writing as a recursive process. In 1980, Flower and Hayes' work on writing cognition developed these findings and became a landmark study that marked a shift in the way the writing process was understood. Their model utilised the 'think aloud' protocol method used in Emig's study, where the subjects said what they were thinking aloud during the writing process. Flower and Hayes stated that this technique allows for a 'detailed record of what is going on in the writer's mind during the act of composing itself' (p. 368).

The model, shown in Figure 2.1, divides the process of composition into three key parts; the task environment, the writer's long term memory and the writing process. These components together create a writing strategy, the first two elements being the context in which the model operates. The task environment refers to social and physical factors outside of the writer that can affect the way a written task is carried out. These are elements that are 'outside the writer's skin, starting with the rhetorical problem or assignment and eventually the growing text itself' (Flower and Hayes, 1981, p. 369). Examples include the assignment itself or the intended audience. The task environment also covers the writer's incentive and the text that is produced as writing is carried out. The writer's long term memory is an internal cognitive process that refers to the writer's knowledge, it covers knowledge on the topic itself, the writing process, strategies than can be utilised and also rules of grammar and the organisation of content.

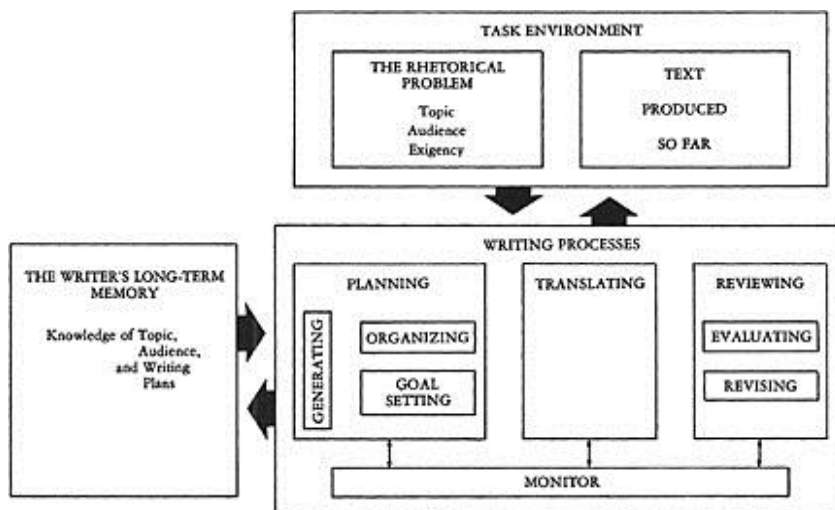


Figure 2.1 Structure of the writing model proposed by Flower & Hayes (1981, p.370)

The writing process component is made up of a number of skills that are monitored by the writer. These skills are carried out in interaction with each other and in a non-linear recursive manner. This part of the Hayes and Flower (1981) model is made up of three processes of operation that produce the written text. These are defined as planning, translating (text generation) and reviewing. Once this process is complete it is followed by the monitor stage which establishes the boundaries of each stage. The model illustrates that these processes occur in a non-linear and recursive manner throughout the complete act of writing, emphasising the role of revision.

The planning process is further made up of three sub elements defined as generating ideas, organising information and the setting of goals. It is through planning that writers ‘form an internal representation of the knowledge that will be used in writing’ (ibid, p. 372). Within this planning process, ideas are converted into written words that are revised later on in the composition process and information contained in the long term memory is most relevant. The organisation of these ideas allows the writer to choose the information that is most appropriate from the idea generating sub component before structuring a writing plan that establishes goals.

The translating component of the writing process is the expression of the results of the planning section in written language. In this section, the translation of ideas to the written word requires the production of text that is correct in grammar and composition. This is achieved through revision of syntax and lexicon whilst referring to the original plan thereby illustrating that planning and translating happen in an interactive manner. The term ‘translate’ was chosen by the researchers as it was their feeling that information produced in the planning section ‘may be represented by a variety of symbol systems other than language, such as imagery. Even when the planning process represents one’s thought in words, that representation is unlikely to be in the elaborate syntax of written English. So the writer’s task is to translate meaning’ (Flower and Hayes, 1981, p. 373). The writer is thereby attempting to develop representation in a variety of forms.

The review element of the process is a conscious one divided into two components: evaluation and revision. Evaluation is the process of the writer assessing their written work to identify errors whereas revision is the process of making these changes. A study by Butler, Elashuk and Poole (2000) confirmed that good writers tend to self-regulate their work by reviewing in this way and utilise their own knowledge of the assignment. They were also found to use strategies of support and have a self-belief in their work which allowed them to be confident that they have control of their writing and that the written outcome would be of a high quality.

The monitor is depicted in Figure 2.1 as parallel to the boxes that make up the writing process and is the function that enables the writer to go between the processes, depending on the point in the task and its individual requirements. It is the monitor that allows for personal writing style as all parts of the writing process are components for the writer to combine in a

way that is personal to them. Second language writers tend to have a limited ability to monitor as they are less able to confidently switch between processes.

In this thesis, I would like to put forward the view that the self-assessment sheet that the writers in my study use, functions almost like the monitor. It acts as a means to enable writers to look critically at their writing and to go back to the processes of planning and/or writing in order to make changes which may improve the text. As the self-assessment sheet is introduced in the last stage i.e. revising and reviewing stage in Flower and Hayes' model, the focus of the self-assessment sheet in the current study is similarly and primarily on revision.

The Bereiter and Scardamalia models

The 1980 model by Flower and Hayes has been critiqued by several scholars. Faigley and Witte wrote in 1981 that this process model had a tendency to rely on the simulated nature of protocols. The results from the protocol method 'describes only one layer of the composing process, an extremely important layer to be sure, but one that still leaves much of what is most mysterious about composing untouched' (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987, p.43). Furthermore, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987, p.43) thought that the model did not allow for the difference between expert and novice writers writing processes and focused on a singular processing model. They felt that the model illuminated the cognitive activities of the writer but not their cognitive process. It was their opinion that an expert writer uses a more efficient process that cannot be used by the novice writer and therefore proposed two models of writing processes to cover this range of proficiency and to attempt to reveal something more about the cognitive processes of the writer.

Bereiter and Scardamalia's two models describe a knowledge-telling process and a knowledge-transforming process (1987). According to their study, the models produce content via 'topical and structural prompts, without strategic formulation of goals, sub goals, search criteria, and other components of problem solving' (p. 348). The models centre on characteristics that are common to all writers, and show why skilled and less-skilled writers compose in different ways and particularly the reasons why less-skilled writers tend to begin composition without planning.

The knowledge-telling process (Figure 2.2) relies on information being retrieved from the writer's memory, specifically cues regarding genre and topic. It proposes that a writer will collect ideas that are prompted by the writing topic or genre itself with ensuing ideas being

produced through writer experience and used if the writer deems them relevant. This process is repeated for each idea that makes up the composition. The model shows how the less skilled writer has a tendency to create a simplified route that bypasses complex planning and moves straight to the translation of thoughts into words. Therefore in this method, the writer is dependent on internal resources to produce the relevant information.

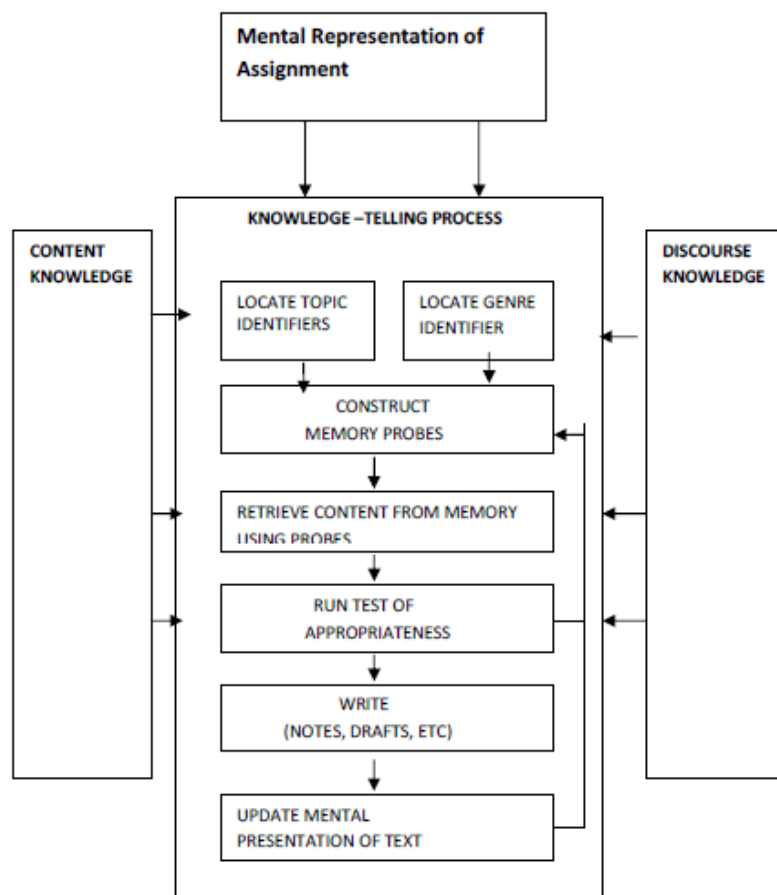


Figure 2.2 The Knowledge-Telling Model (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987, p.18)

The above figure (Figure 2.2) shows how in this model the writer generates information from the writing topic, the genre and particular assignment to create a mental representation of the assignment. From this starting point, the writer relies on memory of 'content knowledge' and 'discourse knowledge' to begin the knowledge telling process which is made up of seven stages outlined in Figure 2.2. In essence, once the memory identifies the idea, topic information can be generated and written down. Criticisms of this model have focused on its lack of consideration for writing tasks that require more complex processing, for example the order of importance of the ideas, the consideration of audience or the creation of argument (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). Therefore whilst this model may be appropriate for the less-

skilled writer, Bereiter and Scardamalia created the Knowledge Transforming model for the more skilled writer who will be faced with more complex writing assignments.

The knowledge transforming model (Figure 2.3) illustrates how an expert writer navigates a writing task by seeing a set of problems that can be solved through the setting of goals that are achieved through a planning process. The writer consciously resolves these problems in both the content problem space and the rhetorical problem space. As seen in (Figure 2.3) goal setting and problem solving comes directly from the writing task and the model illustrates that there are multiple processes at work.

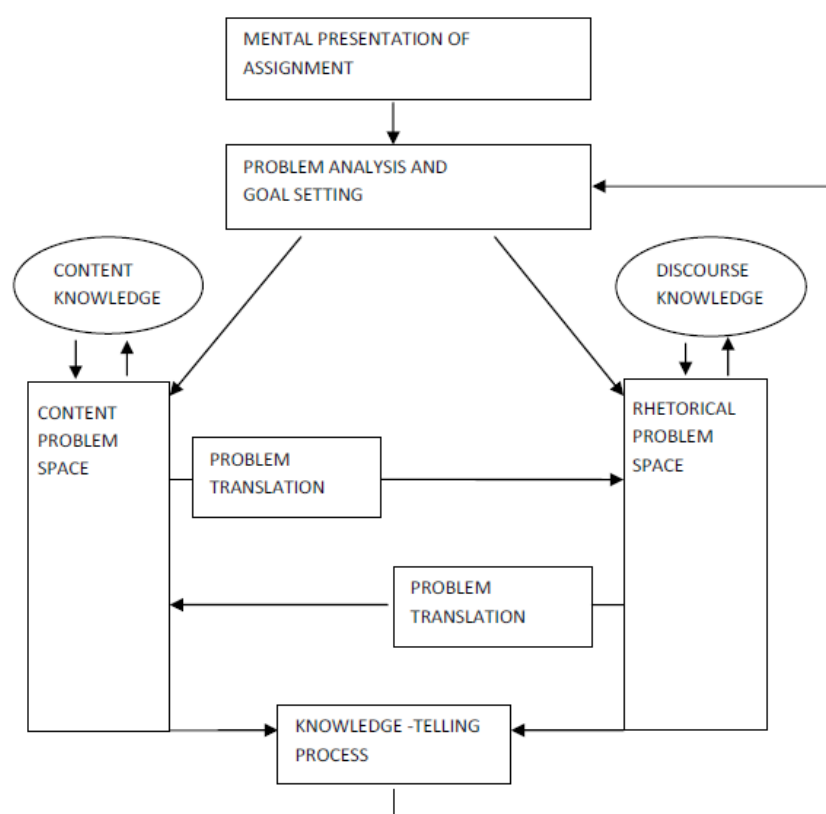


Figure 2.3 The Knowledge-Transforming Model (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987, p.12)

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987, p.354) based the knowledge transforming model on studies of graduate students who 'generated goals for their compositions and engaged in problem solving involving structure and gist as well as verbatim representations'. Writers in this model can identify where problems lie, for example in the generation of content or in

audience expectation and once these problems are resolved, they revert to the knowledge telling process to generate the written words. The knowledge telling and knowledge transforming models illustrate two distinct ways in which writers compose, showing how novice and expert writers view a writing task differently. While the students in this study may be seen as less skilled writers, the self-assessment sheet may help these students move from knowledge-telling to knowledge-transforming by encouraging them to think about the content, organisation and language used in their writing and to make appropriate changes to it.

Both Flowers and Hayes and Bereiter and Scardamalia provided vital insight into the writing process and helped move the understanding of written composition forward. Although many teachers of language have adopted elements of the process approach to composition into their teaching practice, it has yet to achieve widespread acceptance in countries like Libya.

The above discussion focused on the process approach and the cognitive models which can account for writing using this approach. Central to the cognitive approach to process writing is the act of revision. Revision features in all the different accounts of the writing process. Given that revision forms the core of the investigation in this thesis, in the next section I present a more specific review of literature on revision. This review will help to frame the discussion in Chapter 4 of the thesis.

2.3 Revision

This section reviews research conducted on the revision stage of the writing process. I begin with an overview of all the different stages, with an emphasis on research concerning the revision stage. An important point to make in this section is that a significant amount of ground-breaking research on revision was conducted in the 1970s and 1980s. Some of the studies reviewed in this section examine relevant work focusing on the following three points: firstly, the importance of revision in improving writing; secondly, whether EFL learners revise their writing, and if so, on what level (surface or meaning levels); and, thirdly, how experienced and inexperienced writers revise their writing.

Thirty years ago, revision was seen as a fairly simple task comprising a review at the end of the writing process. However, through the development and study of the function of cognitive models, revision is now viewed as a highly complex operation and a starting point, as discussed in the previous section. Revision is an important part of any writing activity

(Murray, 1978; Lowenthal, 1980; Fitzgerald, 1987; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986; Manchon et al, 2007). It is of great significance partly because, under certain conditions, it can improve the quality of the final written text (Ash, 1983; Bridwell, 1980) and partly because, when writers utilise revision to rethink their ideas, it can have a positive effect on the writers' knowledge. Revision enables writers to sort out what they know in order to learn new and improved ways of writing and subsequently discover what was previously unknown (Sommers, 1980). The importance of revision is also stressed by Manchon et al who view it as an 'essential activity that initiates discovery, builds skill levels, and as writers gain maturity through practice over time, creates writing expertise' (2007, p.150).

One of the key contributions to the study of revision is by Murray (1978) who makes a distinction between two types of revision – internal revision and external revision. Internal revision refers to when the student looks again at the meaning of his writing, its content and the way it is organised. External revision refers to where the student proofreads for mistakes related to grammar, vocabulary and mechanics.

Although the terms adopted by Murray are not directly employed in the present study, both internal and external revision are addressed through the use of the self-assessment sheet with its three criteria: content, organisation and language. In this study, I investigate internal revision, when students are prompted by the self-assessment sheet to revise the content and organisation of their writing, and external revision, when they are prompted by the self-assessment sheet to look at their language (grammar and mechanics). The self-assessment sheet was chosen as a useful way of encouraging or prompting revision following Foster (1996, p.7), who states that:

'[s]elf-assessment of writing when it gives emphasis to revision with specific criteria becomes a "powerful" method of the learners' writing ability... students are engaged in a focused, thoughtful revision process when they assess their own writing with set criteria. They determine whether they have to change something, correct or delete. The most essential issue to student self-assessment is that *writers make their own final revision decision*' (emphasis added).

Primarily, research into revision has investigated the effect and importance of revision on learners' written work, as well as examining differences in the revision methods of experienced and inexperienced writers. The following section reviews some of these studies, as these are relevant to my current study where the writers are inexperienced writers.

2.3.1 Research on revision

Although the importance of the revision process was the focus of many studies conducted in the 1970s, some studies emphasised the drawbacks. Shaughnessy (1977 cited in Aly, 2005) found that undergoing a series of revisions can sometimes have a damaging effect on the fluidity of a piece of writing. Hansen (1978) goes a step further by stating that the revision process is pointless and wastes students' time. These viewpoints however are not backed up by any strong evidence and Hansen in particular, does not provide convincing reasons for her stance in relation to the value of revision. Crowley (1977) argues that students have a low commitment to writing and to revising to improve their work (p. 168), adding that that students perceive the writing process as recursive. Crowley also finds that writing for students is either "automatic...or generated by the imposition of an organizational pattern" (167). This means that most students in her class use the "second, and final, draft [as] ordinarily a neat re-copying of the first, with mechanical corrections" (p.167). This leads to final drafts often looking like the first draft; with the same thesis statement and argument. Hansen extends Crowley's argument to a student's writing carried out in timed conditions. She points out that when students produce timed writing, they do not treat revision as a "process," but only as a "fixing" exercise even when they are allowed to revise (p.958).

In contrast, there are an overwhelming number of studies on how revision has a positive effect on the quality of writing. I review some of these studies focusing on three subcategories: studies investigating the action of revision; studies focusing on the processes of experienced versus inexperienced writers; and, studies involving L2 writers. These areas are reviewed because they have a direct link to the current study – the study investigates whether and, if so, how L2 inexperienced writers revised their texts.

2.3.2 The action of revision

In an L1 context, Horning (2002) explains how revision is different from the composing process, although it involves similar actions. Often, writers create a text in the subconscious, as ideas are translated into words on paper. The subconscious can be at work when free writing takes place, enabling writers to avoid 'writers' block'. Through revision, writers move back into the conscious and adopt a more practical system of work, in which they make specific choices and alterations to the text (Willis, 1993).

Studies by Emig (1971) and Pianko (1979) look into how L1 students independently revise their texts during the composition stage of the writing process. In her study, Emig (1971) reports that students made no 'reformulations'; 'reformulation' is defined by Cohen (1982, p.3) as 'a two-stage process'. Firstly, a student's text is 'reconstructed' by removing surface errors of form. The second step encompasses improving 'the style and clarity of thought' (Cohen, 1982, p.3). However, she found that students did say the words 'revision', 'correction' and 'proofreading' as they composed aloud. This led Emig to conclude that although students were under the impression that they were implementing revision techniques, this did not have any real benefit in improving their writing. Work by Pianko (1979) adds weight to this conclusion as she claims that the students of her study also did not reformulate their work in any significant way.

A possible conclusion to be drawn from these few studies is that revision is a conscious process and one that requires a great effort on the part of writers. Given that the writers in these studies appear to struggle with independent revision, they may benefit from guidance in order to fully benefit from the action of revision. In my study, this concept of guided revision is explored through the self-assessment sheet which acts as a guide to move students back into the conscious stage of composing and help them identify where revisions might be beneficial to their text.

2.3.3 Skilled (experienced) versus unskilled (inexperienced) writers

Many studies have investigated the differences between skilled and unskilled writers, with the majority of these studies attempting to understand where the challenges lie for students of writing. A number of terms can be used to describe the proficiency of writers, such as skilful or less skilled, experienced or inexperienced, strong or basic, and good or poor. In the literature, the term 'skilful learners' is generally used to describe those whose writing skills are improving and 'less-skilled writers' for those who write at a level lower than their contemporaries. The term 'skilled vs unskilled' is adopted in many studies referring to writers such as advanced ESL university students and L1 writers (Zamel, 1983; Raimes, 1985; Matsumoto, 1995; Trang and Hoa, 2008; Tsai, 2009). Other studies use the term 'experienced vs inexperienced' (e.g. Shaughnessy, 1977; Sommers, 1980). Others still adopt different terms, such as 'competent vs basic', or 'novice and less able writers' (Monahan, 1984; Shaw and Weir, 2007; Deane et al, 2008). It is typical for research to compare different types of writers and group them accordingly. Many studies of revision practices (Sommers, 1980;

Flower & Hayes 1981; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Faigley & Witte, 1981; Flower et al., 1986) have demonstrated that experienced writers and inexperienced writers revise differently.

A landmark study in this area was conducted by Sommers (1980) where, in addition to looking at revision, she considered the proficiency levels of the writers' language abilities. She divided her subjects into two groups defined as 'experienced writers' and 'student writers'. The group of 20 L1 experienced writers were made up of journalists and academics whilst the inexperienced writers were first year students at universities in Boston and Oklahoma. The study set out to compare how these two groups revised and investigated three essays - one expressive, one explanatory and one persuasive. The subjects were instructed to revise and rewrite their essays twice before taking part in an interview once the final revision was complete. The analysis of the written work was done through the counting and categorisation of any changes made, these changes were defined as one of four clear actions, deletion, subtraction, addition and reordering. Sommers further analysed these changes by classifying them as made at the word, phrase, or sentence level and also changes in content. The results of the landmark study showed that the student writers revised their work in a limited manner, these subjects tended to stick to learned rules which restricted the depth of revision that could be made to their work. Experienced writers were able to make revisions to their text as a whole, positively affecting meaning. The study also illustrated that the student writers were not unwilling to revise their essay; rather, they lacked the set of strategies required to undertake revision. Another finding was the difference in approach between experienced and inexperienced writers. Those in the experienced group could see that revision was a 'recursive process' that allowed them to reshape their points whereas the inexperienced writers (students) could only see revision as a way to re-word their work. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to introduce the self-assessment technique into the revision stage of writing to help students (classified in this research as inexperienced writers), see for themselves the areas that might need revision.

Faigley and Witte (1981) examine the revisions of six professional writers, six advanced university writers, and six inexperienced university students considered to have weak writing skills. All participants were asked to write about an assigned topic over the course of three sessions: the first day for planning, the second for writing a first draft, and the third for writing a second draft. The advanced university writers carried out the most revisions. Furthermore, there were notable differences between groups with regards to revision type

employed, with the advanced university writers carrying out more content-type revisions, as in the case of Sommers' (1980) experienced writers. The expert writers made fewer revisions than the advanced group and the inexperienced writers made the fewest revisions, which were 'overwhelmingly surface changes' (p. 407). Faigley and Witte (1981) also report that subjects vary in the order in which they undertake revision. The two categories of participants, advanced writers and inexperienced writers, approach revision differently; inexperienced writers begin with changes to mechanics whilst advanced writers leave these to the end of the process. A study by Wall and Petrovsky (1981) supports these findings, reporting that their experienced writers make alterations to content and larger portions of writing, whereas student writers were seen to restrict their changes to sentence level revision.

It is often assumed that the majority of problems faced by student writers are associated with factors related to methodology, for example planning or editing. This concept inspired the study of five L1 less-skilled students that attended a community college (Perl, 1975). The study hypothesised that most problems in composition are methodological and attempted to isolate the factors that prevented less-skilled writers from making revisions beyond word level. It also set out to discover whether or not student writing could be analysed in a systematic manner that could be replicated elsewhere. The research employed a method whereby the students composed their work out loud, combined with in depth interviews to create a student profile. The findings illustrated that in composition, the students went through 'recursive' processes in order to make surface-level revisions to their work, such as revisions to syntax, vocabulary and mechanics. Perl refers to this as 'forward-moving action that exists by virtue of a backward-moving action' (1980b, p.364) after discovering that the students' work displayed severe problems with cohesion, even after revision. Perl (1979, p. 322-333) concludes that weaker students are able to identify surface mistakes and recognise rules, but not to visualise or provide for the expectations and needs of the reader, known as 'projective structuring'. In addition, Perl notes that the writings of less-skilled writers often lost meaning through editing, stating that 'editing intrudes so often and to such a degree that it breaks down the rhythms... As soon as a few words are written on a paper, detection and correction of errors replaces writing and revising... truncate[s] the flow of composing'. Perl (1979) suggests that the reason behind the commission of such errors is due to the students' perceptions. In many cases, the students read aloud segments of writing that had subsequently been deleted in revision; the student makes an assumption that what they write is being understood by the reader, when this is not always the case. This was further analysed by Rose

(1984), who illustrates that when a student becomes focused on corrections and revision they may lose sight of the composition as a whole and forget what they were attempting to write about (see 2.3.2).

A number of studies carried out in the 1970s have suggested that the more experienced writers are able to carry out revision at a paragraph level, whereas inexperienced writers tend to limit themselves to the sentence and word level. For example, Stallard (1974, p.213) investigated the quality of revision made by fifteen student writers of senior standing. These were selected from the senior class of a Virginia public high school. He found that those writers that could be classified as 'good' made more revisions than the subjects in his study. Of these subjects, only a small percentage made changes at a paragraph level that also had consequences for 'changes in the organisation of sentences'. Most restricted their changes to words and sentences. This conclusion was later supported by a study by Perl (1979) who showed that the average number of revisions per subject was 31 for each essay and that none of these went further than sentence level changes. The conclusion of this study was that students' believed revision to be an editing process that involves correcting spelling, grammar and punctuation and that the focus on this type of edit results in the students failing to see writing as a way to convey their ideas as a whole.

Rose (1980) identifies an aspect that could be used to differentiate between ten UCLA undergraduates skilled and un-skilled as writers. Their study shows that flexibility is a key feature of the skilled writer; that they are able to consider how well their writing matches the goals they had at the outset. A skilled writer is therefore able to make revisions, amending strategy if required. An earlier study by Pianko (1975) investigated the composing process of 17 students enrolled at a community college in a freshman's composition course in New Jersey. The study showed that skilled writers take time to plan before writing begins, in addition to revising during the writing process, for example, re-reading, pausing and re-considering. This method can result in the creation of a number of drafts, allowing for the revision of all aspects of writing. In comparison to unskilled writers, skilled writers are able to make effective changes to both content and organisation (Pianko, 1979; Sommers, 1980).

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) show that better writers can be recognised as those who take more time to plan their writing, create more complex plans, whilst also reviewing and evaluating their plans a number of times during the writing process. Skilled writers also actively search for solutions to self-identified problems and consider a number of other perspectives within

their work, such as the viewpoint of the reader. This is known as ‘global revision’, as opposed to the more local level revision observed in the work of unskilled writers (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996, p.240). Less skilled writers experience difficulties in considering the point of view of the audience (Flower and Hayes 1980) and spend less time planning and revising than skilled writers (Pianko, 1979). Furthermore, less skilled writers do not exhibit flexibility in writing (Rose, 1980). Although research in this field has revealed differences in the behaviour of skilled and unskilled writers during the composition process, Raimes (1985, p.231) believes that there is no clear evidence that this is the case. She points out that ‘there is at present no consensus on valid criteria for measuring skill in writing and thus no clear agreement on the meaning of unskilled’. For example, some researchers, such as Jones and Tetroe (cited in Raimes, 1985) see language proficiency as an effective factor in determining skill, whereas others, for example, Zamel (1984), considers the role of language proficiency of lesser importance.

Inconsistent results and opinions may derive from the types of criteria used to categorise writers as skilled or less-skilled, experienced or inexperienced, proficient or less proficient. Some researchers employ comprehensive holistic assessments, others use a single test undertaken in a classroom environment, and yet others adopt proficiency testing. This discrepancy can be problematic as a native English-speaking skilled writer will obviously have a higher level of language proficiency than a non-native speaker in an EFL class. Additionally, the issues facing them are evidently very different. EFL students’ writing is affected by a variety of issues such as first language and culture as has been outlined by several researchers concerned with Contrastive Rhetoric (Leki, 1991; Grabe, 2001), rendering it difficult to effectively categorise students as skilled or less-skilled writers. Raimes (1985) suggests that the main issue in research design should be the legitimacy of the criteria used to distinguish between skilled and less-skilled writers. It is recommended that multiple criteria be considered to ensure an accurate assessment resulting in a valid conclusion.

2.3.4 A summary of characteristics of skilled and unskilled writers

Previous studies have illustrated that each writer utilises a different strategy depending on their particular situation, which can result either in a composition that is cohesive and accessible to the audience or one that is difficult for the audience to comprehend. Skilled writers who produce work of the former category are able to plan effectively, identify the aim of the writing task and make both meaningful and organised revisions to their texts. In

comparison, less skilled writers dedicate very little time to planning and spend less time on revision (Perl, 1979; Pianko, 1979; Sommers, 1980). However, in the composition phase, there seems to be less difference in the behaviour of skilled and less-skilled writers, with differences mostly being related to other aspects, such as current knowledge and motivation (Perl, 1980a, 1980b; Jones, 1981 Gaskill, 1986; Hall, 1987; Arndt, 1987).

Although different terms are used to refer to different writing abilities as discussed above, most studies agree on the inherent characteristics of each of these writers. Table 2.2 below presents briefly some of these characteristics.

Terms	Characteristics
Skilled writers / experienced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Advanced ESL university students, professional EFL writers, advanced L1 writers, journalists and editors. *Spend more time planning and revising work. *Manage development of content and organisation. *View writing as non-linear generative process. *Consider purpose and audience and utilise background knowledge. *Create logical connections between points using transitions. *Make more ‘meaning’ revisions
Unskilled writers / inexperienced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Unskilled EFL writers, novice L2 writers, EFL university students, L1 university students. *Spend less time planning and revising. *Understand revision to be a rewording activity. Focus on lexical changes. *Do not tend to re-think ideas. *Edit words or sentences prematurely as opposed to revising content and organisation of emerging text. *Make surface revisions.

Table 2.2: Characteristics of skilled (experienced) and unskilled (inexperienced) writers

The above table 2.2 demonstrates that the different terms adopted generally pertain to the same characteristics, meaning that students’ proficiency or ability can vary according to the type of task set and what writers do in different stages. Many studies have attempted to identify characteristics that differentiate skilled and novice, or less able, writers.

Scardamalia and Bereiter (1987) suggest that what distinguishes between the abilities of writers is the planning process; a belief upheld by Eysenck and Keane (2005). However, Field (2004) points out that skilled writers plan less than unskilled writers, although they do concentrate on coherence and cohesion of content.

Other researchers differentiate between writers' abilities by setting certain criteria to measure writing proficiency. Stern (1992) believes that criteria for proficiency assessment should vary between zero to native-like proficiency, where writing with full competency is rarely achievable by L2 students.

Many researchers believe that it is complicated to define 'proficiency' in writing in the EFL context (See Granger & Tyson, 1996 for an account of EFL writing in Belgium and Narita, Sato & Sugiura, 2004 in Japan). Some researchers and scholars connect proficiency to components of linguistic proficiency taking the shape of vocabulary (Read, 2000), while others such as Uzawa (1996) in Canada think it is the influence of L1 in EFL. A study in The Netherlands by Kuiken & Vedder (2008) indicated that syntax is the main element that is responsible for proficiency in writing, whereas, Purpura (2004) connects grammar with proficiency. Field (2005) argues that the ESL writer has to carry out cognitive loads as they have to concentrate on different levels, such as grammar, spelling, vocabulary etc. In Chapter 4, when I report on the results of my data analysis, I take into consideration some of the issues mentioned above on inexperienced writers and the complexity around investigating revisions in their writing.

In the next section, I look more closely at EFL writers and studies which have investigated their revision processes. This is relevant for my thesis, as my writers are all EFL writers.

The present study attempts to introduce the technique of self-assessment to investigate if with the help of specific criteria, inexperienced writers are able to revise at higher levels, such content and organisation (termed in this study as 'meaning revisions') or if they will continue to make only lower level revisions ('surface revisions') common of inexperienced writers. Since the participants of the present study are EFL students, the following section reviews previous research on EFL writers and revision.

2.3.5 EFL writers and revision

Silva (1993) states that one of the difficulties EFL writers face is that they tend to focus predominantly on grammatical errors during the revision process. They are therefore unable to make intuitive changes based on what they know about the language. Zamel (1983) investigated L2 skilled and unskilled writers and found that, while they tended to compose similarly to L1 writers, skilled L2 writers tended to focus on ideas and revise at discourse level, while unskilled L2 writers concerned themselves with short essays and tended to edit

their writing constantly through the writing process. Zamel (1983) concludes that skilled L2 writers are more perceptive during the revision stage than L2 unskilled writers. Raimes (1985) sought to shed light on unskilled L2 writers by conducting a study on eight subjects (the subjects were students in Raimes' developmental ESL composition course at Hunter College in 1983), all considered to be unskilled L2 writers, and found that the majority of participants carried out very little planning before or during writing and paid little attention to the revision process.

While the studies reviewed appear to point to L2 unskilled writers as having more difficulty with revision than skilled L2 writers, a study by Belcher (1989) in the United States provides evidence to the contrary. Her study consisted of a group of 22 Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Spanish graduate and undergraduate ESL student writers of varying levels of language proficiency, divided into two sub-groups. Despite the subjects being defined as unskilled writers, it was found that they were able to revise in a sophisticated manner, for example, by making more significant changes than mere surface changes. Belcher states that 'ESL basic writers do make global changes when they revise rather than simply correcting surface errors' (1989, p.1237). Interestingly, the study also highlighted differences between the subjects from different language backgrounds, therefore rendering it difficult to refer to ESL learners as one homogenous group.

A small-scale case study by Gaskill (1986) looks closely at the composition processes of 4 EFL Spanish undergraduate students categorised as 'more proficient' and 'less proficient' in two different languages (Spanish and English) and reports that in contrast to Belcher (1989), the students made more surface changes than meaning changes in both their Spanish and English essays. Furthermore, the research showed the processes of composition and revision to be extremely similar in both languages. What was different in this investigation was that the more proficient writers in the group required some coaching in critical thinking, particularly in terms of considering the reader's response to their argument, while the less proficient writers, in addition to facing these difficulties, also required assistance in the generation and development of ideas.

Likewise, Rashid (1996) in Malaysia examined the writing processes and strategies of students' L1 and L2 writing processes and the strategies adopted to perform written tasks in Malay and in English. This study found that advanced writers implemented a greater number and wider range of strategies than did intermediate writers, in both languages. Similarly, a

study by Yang (2002) which is one of the few attempts undertaken in China was conducted to explore the strategy used by students during their writing process. Yang found that skilled writers took time to plan their writing, generate ideas and make revisions to their work prior to submission. Xiu and Xiao (2004) in China undertook a 'protocol-based analysis' that investigated the connection between strategies used by Chinese EFL students and grades achieved on English proficiency tests. This study also concludes that the skilled and less-skilled writer use different strategies when planning ideas and writing, corroborating the results of Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) model.

In the Libyan context which is the context of the current study and the context of El-Aswad (2002)'s study, similar results were found. El-Aswad (2002) looked into the process and strategic approach to writing in Arabic and English of Libyan University level students. On the topic of revision, El-Aswad writes that the students paid more attention to surface changes than meaning changes supporting other studies reviewed in this chapter. He also stated that this is a result of past practice and learned approaches in the two languages. The recommendation of El-Aswad is that these Libyan students require further training in revision strategies.

The evidence from these studies shows the enormous variation that exists in the field on how EFL writers compose and write in English and in their L1s. This study attempts to broaden the field by exploring the Libyan context further.

2.3.6 Summary of revision studies

A review of the literature in this chapter on writers, the writing process, and revision more specifically, raises the following points which I seek to explore in my study:

- Predominantly, a common finding in the research on the revision practices of experienced/skilled and inexperienced/unskilled writers suggests that experienced writers typically engage in internal revision, at the paragraph level, whereas inexperienced writers limit themselves to external revision only, at word level. My study considers this issue by looking at a group of inexperienced/unskilled writers and investigates if they do indeed limit themselves to only external revision (i.e. surface revision) as most of these studies appear to suggest.
- The majority of research has looked at writing proficiency and its relationship to revision. There are very few studies which have focused on how guided revision

might help learners. There is also little information from existing studies that show how students actually revised their texts. We are unable to determine if they were guided through revision or left to revise independently. This study intends to use set criteria during the revision stage to investigate whether students are able to improve their writing with this aid.

Ultimately, this thesis draws on an earlier proposal by Sommers (1981) that students are not unwilling to revise their work; rather they do not have the relevant skills or understanding of the nature of revision to make positive changes. Similarly, Min (2006, p.135) states that '[r]evision instruction cannot effectively deal with ... problems among inexperienced writers because it requires them to view their texts from an outsider's perspective and think of revision strategies alone'. Therefore, the introduction of a set of criteria encompassing some areas that learners need to consider when revising may be considered a step towards providing students with the revision strategies they require. In this study, as mentioned previously, I have developed a self-assessment sheet in order to achieve this. In the next section, I present an overview of literature in the field of assessment, more broadly, and self-assessment, more specifically. The section will look at the research which influenced the choice and design of the self-assessment sheet used in this study.

2.4 Introduction and general overview of assessment

Assessment in itself is considered a process of collecting, synthesising and interpreting information in order to judge students' performance (Lambert & Lines, 2000). It refers to the different methods used to collect information on learner's language ability or achievement, and is therefore an umbrella term encompassing diverse practices such as once-only class tests, short essays, long project reports, writing portfolios, or large-scale standardised examinations (Rivera et al, 2006). Information is collected, analysed against recognised standards and divided into its basic parts, and then reassembled (i.e. to synthesise them). This information is then interpreted in order to identify students' problems, to form judgments about aspects of their performance, to provide feedback and to express teachers' level of satisfaction with the result of the students' work (Airasian, 1994; Richards, 2003; Yang & Xu, 2008). The term 'assessment' involves the two key elements. Firstly, the identification of criteria that is to be applied to the learners' work. Secondly, making a judgment about how effectively the work meets the set criterion.

Over the past twenty years or so the dominant exam-oriented and test-focused approach to assessment has been replaced by an assessment culture which seeks to support and develop learning (Gipps, 1994). Gipps (1994) further asserts that to create tests with any purpose other than to support and develop learning will have a negative impact on the students involved and for the system as a whole. This view of assessment as having an important role in supporting and developing learning is at the core of this thesis.

This chapter reviews research in the field of assessment and places the present study within the context of this research by focusing on issues to do with writing.

2.4.1 Assessing writing

The assessment of second-language writing has been extensively researched and has become a fundamental pedagogical principle for educators over the past three decades (Cumming, 1997). Writing ability can be tested indirectly, using discrete test items that target knowledge of specific linguistic features, such as grammatical or stylistic choices or errors, or specific behaviour such as editing or spelling (Cumming, 1997). Some educators, such as Lado (1961) and Harris (1987), suggest that the student's second language writing may also be tested directly by setting the students a foreign language writing task. For example, using 'a short composition on a certain topic for a specific period of time in which style and content are graded as well as mechanics' (Lado, 1961). This is how data was collected in this thesis through a set task which was set for the participants in the study.

Teachers may devote more time to evaluating writing than any other teaching responsibility, as assessing writing is not an easy task particularly at advanced ESL levels when students' writing becomes longer and more complex. An important point to note is that, whichever type of assessment is used, it is predominantly teacher-centred, relying on the teacher as the sole assessor of the writing. Given that one of the aims of this thesis is to consider how learners feel about assessing their own writing, I will look at a range of research on different methods of assessment and the roles played by teachers and learners in these different types of assessment in the next section.

2.4.2 Different methods of assessment

2.4.2.1 Summative assessment

Summative assessment tests learning itself and is the measure that ‘sums up’ the final results of the accomplishment (Xiaoxiao & Yan, 2010). It is common to undertake this type of assessment at a fixed point in time, for example, at the end of the programme of study. Summative assessment aims to summarise a student’s learning at a chosen point in their studies, but is not able to produce immediate feedback in a context that is of use in helping the student and the teacher through the process of learning (Grab, 2008).

Several researchers and educational thinkers have however concluded that a summative approach to assessment is not the most valuable tool to evaluate learning (Bruner, 1960; Rogers, 1983; Boud, 1995; Freire, 1998). Bruner (1960, p.30) in particular critiques this method of assessment for its focus on the insignificant features of the subject and the way in which it promotes teaching in a ‘disconnected fashion and learning by rote’. A further noteworthy criticism of summative assessment is its tendency to elicit students’ emotions. These traditional approaches to assessing and grading work seem to foster apprehension and worry in students. A leading theorist of learner autonomy and self-assessment, Boud (1995, p.3), attributes his own interest in the field to his experiences of ‘failure, feelings of unfairness when being assessed, increasing doubts about the validity of the judgements of others’. Other researchers, such as Foster (1996, p.76), describe summative assessment as ‘pre-specified response assessment’, which can take numerous forms such as ‘true/false items, fill-in-the blank, multiple choice tests and short answer questions’. This pre-specified response style of test is presently used in the Libyan education system but has been strongly criticised as a method by which teachers’ important judgements and continuous assessment of students’ progress are not considered (Fleming and Stevens, 2004, cited in Shihiba, 2011).

However, despite a reasonable degree of consensus regarding the negative effects of summative assessment on the learning of students, it remains one of the most common practices in most EFL contexts (Weimer, 2002; Peterson & Irving, 2008; Remesal, 2007; Orafi& Borg, 2009), even in those that are considered learner-focused (Weimer, 2002, p.145). Although there is strong opposition to this method, there is yet to be proposed an effective alternative and practical means of evaluation. The Libyan context is a case in point (Orafi& Borg, 2009; Alhmali, 2007).

Despite the current lack of alternatives, the most popular proposal to replace summative assessment appears to be formative assessment (Foster, 1996; Paris, 1998; Weimer, 2002; Nunan, 2004). Paris (1998, p.207) suggests there should be ‘minimal emphasis’ on standardised achievement testing and increased focus on assessments which assist teachers, enlighten parents and inspire students. Sadler (1989, p.142-143) notes the importance of assisting students in developing vital skills that allow them to evaluate the quality of their own work. In support of these ideas, Nunan (2004) asserts that testing should not just be viewed as a way to evaluate learning and instead should be used to encourage learning. In the next section, I consider these views on formative assessment in greater detail.

2.4.2.2 Formative/alternative assessment

Due to an increased interest in learner-centred classrooms, as opposed to traditional teacher-centred classes where the teacher is held responsible for the learning process alone (Wiggles, 1992), a formative/assessment approach has been suggested as a viable alternative to evaluating student learning. The formative approach attempts to develop learning by providing the student with feedback on their progress throughout the learning process, causing it to be known as assessment *for* learning and it can be carried out on a one-to-one basis either in discussion or through one-way contact. Gipps (1994, p.125) describes the difference between these two styles of delivery as the purpose and the effect.

Formative assessment comprises of any activity that can produce information that is utilised in feedback to more directly align both teaching and learning to the needs of the student, whilst promoting student learning (Black & William, 1998, p.140; Black et al, 2003, 2004). A far reaching study by Black and William (1998) and Black et al. (2003) came to the conclusion that the use of formative assessment in the classroom increased learning standards and assisted the lowest achievers above all, thereby increasing the overall success of the class and reducing the range.

Smith (1997) proposes several testing methods for writing which can be used for formative purposes. These are (1) self-assessment (which is the main subject of this study), (2) portfolio testing, (3) project testing or assessment, (4) take-home tests and (5) computer-based writing tests. I discuss two of these types below, self-assessment and peer assessment, because the main focus of this study is self-assessment and its application by L2 students in the revision stage, as an attempt to improve their writing. I also discuss peer assessment because most studies in the literature such as Matsuno, (2009), Diab, (2010), Larsari, (2012) and Lam,

(2013) have compared self-assessment to peer assessment (see section 5.1.1). I begin with peer assessment and consider the implications of peer assessment in a Libyan classroom. I then introduce self-assessment before moving on to consider the different ways in which self-assessment may be used in a classroom. The purpose of this discussion is to provide useful background information about the decisions behind the design of the self-assessment sheet used in the current study and reported in greater detail in Chapter 3.

2.4.2.2.1 Peer assessment

Peer assessment is used by teachers typically within the learner-centred classroom, where more learning responsibilities are given to students than relying solely on teachers. For peer assessment, students may be split into groups and asked to execute assessment tasks that allow for commentary and judgement of each other's work. Students are encouraged to discuss the progress of their learning with each other to improve their learning development (Boud, 1995; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Rico, 2008).

Peer assessment is considered to have a very positive effect on students as it allows them to observe their learning from each other's perspectives (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986). The increased opportunity for communication can increase the students' confidence in their own work and make the student more sensitive to the criteria of their evaluation (Saito & Fujita, 2004). This allows the student to reflect on their own progress and learning and, if implemented carefully, will help transform singular teacher evaluation into a dynamic student to student type evaluation (Saito & Fujita, 2004).

Despite research reporting on the benefits of peer assessment, introducing this method into the Libyan context may be difficult. Firstly, this type of assessment is not suited to the large class sizes (Ahmed, 2011), typical of Libyan schools, as it is too much of a challenge to ensure all students participate in this type of group activity (Ballantyne et al., 2000). Secondly, the cultural landscape of the Libyan classroom is not appropriate, as a typical Libyan student would find it difficult to criticise their fellow students' work and similarly would struggle to accept the idea of a peer correcting their work. There has been some discussion on whether particular groups of students in different contexts and cultural background deal with peer feedback equally well. Allaei and Connor (1990) found that the students' culture had a significant impact on the effectiveness of peer feedback groups. In a series of papers, Nelson, Carson, and Murphy argue that peer review works less well with Chinese speaking students. The first study (Nelson & Murphy, 1993) found that Chinese

speaking students were less likely to accept the right of other non-native speakers of English to judge their writing. Similarly, Carson and Nelson (1994, p.23) in Georgia State University in the United States found that ‘Chinese speaking students studying ESL will generally work toward maintaining group harmony and mutual face-saving to maintain a state of cohesion’. This meant that the peer review groups were less successful because of an unwillingness to criticise others.

A later study of a group of 11 students of mixed nationalities on an advanced ESL course at a university in the USA led the researchers to suggest that Chinese students, amongst others, are also more likely to have negative views of feedback from fellow students. ‘ESL students from countries with a large power distance are perhaps less likely to value their peers’ views than are students from countries with a lower power distance ¹(e.g., students from the United States)’ (Nelson & Carson, 1998, p.130). The Libyan context is generally considered one with a large power distance, so the implementation of peer assessment may not be very successful. However, self-assessment may not be as difficult to implement. It is suitable for large class sizes, therefore saving on both time and space (Brown & Hudson, 2002), and the students are not required to share their work with their peers countering any feelings of shyness from the students.

In the next section, I explore the concept of self-assessment in greater detail, although generally, and then move on to a section which highlights issues around the self-assessment of writing.

2.5 Self-assessment

In the past, there was little interest in self-assessment in language learning, especially concerning second language education. Pedagogically, it was not common practice to ask students to assess their own performance (Coombe and Canning, 2002). Over the past few

¹Large power distance is defined by Western (1991, p.28) as “the extent to which the less powerful members...expect and accept that power is distributed unequally”. Low power distance in the Western definition is reverence for equality, where unequal relationships (such as between teacher and student) only exist in specific contexts (such as during class but not after).

years however, with increased attention on learner-centred curricula, the topic of self-assessment has developed out of the area of autonomous learning or learner independence. The concept of learner autonomy has been a major preoccupation in much research, with the main focus on learners' ability to take responsibility for their own learning (Griffiths, 2008). It has now become a common belief that an efficient teaching/learning strategy requires students to make some contribution to the learning cycle as a whole (Le Blanc & Painchaud, 1985). In other words, students should not see their task as limited in content as chosen by others, through techniques imposed by others, or for purposes established by others in their name. Being part of the complete learning cycle should mean being involved in the assessment process, since evaluation has now been recognised as a component in the educational process (LeBlanc & Painchaud, 1985).

Researchers have proposed various definitions of self-assessment. Gregory, Cameron and Davies (2011, p.8) define self-assessment as a sequence of skills in a student's ability to 'reflect on the quality of their work, judge the degree to which it reflects explicitly stated goals or criteria, and revise accordingly'. Boud (2007, p.122), with a focus on senior and tertiary students, defines self-assessment as: 'the involvement of students in identifying standards and/or criteria to apply to their work and making judgements about the extent to which they have met these criteria and standards'

Self-assessment has been defined as learners supplying information about themselves, for example, concerning their capabilities, the progress they feel they are making and what they think they can or cannot achieve with their current level of learning in a course (Blanche & Merino, 1989). Harris and McCann (1994, p.5) define self-assessment as 'useful information about students' expectations and needs, their problems and worries, how they feel about their own (learning) process, their reactions to the materials and methods being used, what they think about the course in general'. These definitions underline the importance of the learners' contribution to their own learning process. Klenowski (1995, p.146) defines self-assessment as the evaluation or judgment of the 'worth' of one's performance and the identification of one's strengths and weaknesses with a view to improving one's learning outcomes. Cassidy (2007) defines self-assessment for students as the acceptance of responsibility for their own learning and performance. Bachman (2000) states that self-assessment provides an approach in which learners typically rate themselves according to a number of criteria or dimensions.

Harris (1997) indicates that self-assessment is broadly approved to be an essential learning tool for independent language learning, helping learners to monitor their progress and link learning to their needs. This view is rooted in the seminal work of Oskarsson (1980).

The definition of self-assessment depends to some extent on its purpose. Self-assessment can be used for a number of purposes, including appropriate placement, diagnosis and feedback to the learner, programme evaluation, assessment of attitudes and socio-psychological differences, etc. (Henning, 1987). A number of researchers (Haughton & Dickinson, 1988; Oscarson, 1989; Bachman, 2000) have attempted to define the term by identifying two types of self-assessment according to their purposes: (1) performance-oriented self-assessment, and (2) development-oriented self-assessment. A major distinction between these types is that the former typically samples the test taker's performance at some point in time, whereas the latter assesses participants for an extended period in order to detect changes and patterns of development over time such as using portfolio journals in formative assessment. In this thesis, the type of self-assessment that is being used falls somewhere in the middle of these two types. While it looks at a test taker's performance at one point in time, the self-assessment also detects changes through drafts, although not over an extended period of time.

In the next section, I move to a more specific discussion on studies which have investigated the effect of self-assessment on writing. The studies are of a wide-range. Some look at the effect of self-assessment, while others compare self-assessment and other types such as peer- and teacher-assessment in writing classrooms.

2.5.1 Research on self-assessment of writing

Nielsen (2011, p.1) indicates that 'in its broadest sense, self- assessment in writing signifies any teaching method that prompts writers to think about, evaluate, and/or respond to their own writing. Through this process of self- evaluation, the writer both improves the finished written product and builds a repository of writing and revising skills for later use'. The literature reviewed reveals that the majority of studies on the benefits of self-assessment use observational techniques and a description of what occurs in the classroom. Very few offer empirical data to support their findings or illustrate exactly how effective self-assessment can be in writing classrooms. However, lately, there is an increase of the number of empirical studies regarding the implementation of the self-assessment technique in writing classrooms, especially EFL classrooms. This study aims to add to the growing body of empirical studies to test the effectiveness of self-assessment in an EFL writing classroom (see Table 2.3).

The selection of these studies is based on the most recent studies of self-assessment of writing in an EFL context. These studies are concerned *with how* students use self-assessment in monitoring and thus improving their writing performance and rating without comparing self-assessment with any other kind of assessment i.e. peer or teacher. This is what I am doing in the current study. The focus is entirely on self-assessment and not on self-assessment in comparison to peer or teacher assessment.

Researcher (date)	Title of study	Context	Methodology	Results
Honsa (2013)	Self-assessment in EFL Writing: A Study of Intermediate EFL Students at a Thai University.	Thailand/100 intermediate EFL university students	Students' writing, self-assessment form and post-study interview.	Students' essays had improved in three major areas involved in the writing process, self-assessment as a strategy that promotes learner autonomy.
Khodadady & Khodabakhshzade (2012)	The effect of portfolio and self-assessment on writing ability and autonomy	Iran/ 60 university students	Writing IELTS task and the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (Pritrich et al., 1991). Descriptive statistics and T test for analysis.	Portfolio and self-assessment not only make learners autonomous in writing but also improve their writing ability.
Javaherbakhsh (2010)	The Impact of Self-Assessment on Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Skill	Iran/ 73 students of advanced level Language Institutes	TOEFL test, a rating checklist, and two writing tests; i.e., pre and post-tests.	Administering self-assessment techniques to the experimental group improve writing skill significantly.
Kasule & Lunga (2010)	How effective are students' self-editing endeavours? Evidence from L2 writing tasks	Botswana (South Africa) 10 ESL university students	Writing task & self-editing form focused on mechanics and grammar.	Self-editing did not minimise mistakes in students' writing.
Oscarson (2009)	Self-assessment of writing in learning English as a foreign language: A study at the upper secondary school level.	Sweden/ 102 students & 2 teachers.	Questionnaire, written assignments & interviews.	Participants displayed capability in self-assessing their EFL writing, both at group and individual level. There were some individual differences, and participants did better at assessing their ' <i>general</i>

				(off-task) ability in EFL writing than their <i>particular</i> (on-task) ability' (p, 218-219).
Wang (2007)	The Addition of an Affect Test and Self-assessment into ESL Writing Assessment: Process and Effect. A Case Study in a Non-English Major Postgraduate ESL Writing Class.	China/122 ESL non-English major postgraduates (only 24 students applied self-assessment to their writing).	Writing assignments, questionnaires & interviews.	Self-assessment is more helpful in the revision stage than 'in timed-essay writing' while affect test helped learners to develop more in the final writing. Majority of students had positive attitude towards self-assessment.
Brown (2005)	Self-assessment of writing in independent language learning programs: The value of annotated samples	8 Chinese participants from different language background (Some of the participants were teachers and some were third and fourth year undergraduate learners).	Writing task, annotated students' scripts and a questionnaire.	While some students could identify and correct their own mistakes, others were frustrated because they were aware that they could not self-correct. The researcher stated that, generally, the method is 'both reliable and useful' (p.174).
Aly (2005)	The effect of self-assessment as a revision technique on the EFL-learners' essay writing.	Egypt/ 40 engineering students (university level) & 2 teachers.	Writing task, self-assessment form and feedback form.	Students significantly improved the content, organisation and language of their writing.

Table 2.3 A selection of self-assessment studies of writing in EFL context

All the participants who participated in each of the studies presented in Table 2.3 are divided into two groups; experimental and control. However, the procedures followed in each study and the manner in which the process of self-assessment is applied is different. The following discussion provides more information regarding the self-assessment technique and how it is used in these studies.

In his study, Honsa (2013) divided the students into two groups. The students in the control group did not have self-assessment training. The students in the experimental group on the other hand, were trained to self-assess their essays using self-assessment checklists and guidance sheets. All the essays were graded by two native speakers. The student participants and the native speakers were then interviewed. All of them also answered questions in reflective journals.

In the study conducted by Khodadady & Khodabakhshzade (2012) only the participants in the experimental group were required to write portfolios regularly and perform self-assessment tasks. In the first phase, the students in the experimental group were given instructions during the first four weeks. They wrote one task in a classroom setting and one outside a classroom setting on various topics. They prepared files to keep a record of their tasks. The teachers corrected the students' tasks using the checklists at each session and discussed the content of them in the class. Each student was also given the benefit of an individual conference with the teacher. After four weeks, the students felt that they could follow the instruction to self-assess their papers using the checklist independently. This self-assessment was done either at home or in class. In the second phase of their study, students showed improvement in self-assessing their tasks using the checklist. The teacher decreased the teacher-student discussion sessions and finally stopped them altogether, except for some of the students who needed more help. Finally, almost all of the students could self-assess their papers, fill-in the checklists, and add them to their portfolio to be randomly checked by the teacher.

Javaherbakhsh (2010) started his study with a pre-test which was conducted to measure students' writing ability. Next, the selected participants were randomly divided into control and experimental groups. Then, a descriptive topic was given to the students to assess their writing proficiency. They were asked to write approximately 150 words on a certain topic after each of the three sessions conducted. The experimental group assessed themselves using the checklist. Three raters were asked to correct and score each composition by using the

analytical method of scoring. The teacher commented on the students' performance based on their weaknesses at the bottom of each checklist. The control group did not receive any feedback. Kasule & Lunga (2010) asked the students to undertake two writing tasks. Task 1 consisted of a one hour session in the classroom where the students wrote one expository paragraph. Each student was provided with a typed outline of the content of the paragraph. The students then organised the content into a paragraph. Students were taught in previous lectures how to organise ideas and link them together so that they could apply it to their writing. Task 2 comprised of a take-home task completed over three weeks. Students had to produce a four or five-paragraphed essay (typed or handwritten) from given topics.

In groups, students developed a self-editing form by brainstorming to recall their teacher's annotations on previously marked essays. Through the activity of brainstorming, different errors emerged such as run-on sentence and errors in subject-verb agreement. After explaining each error using examples from the students' essays, every student was handed a typed list of what to look-out for while self-editing their essays.

In Oscarson's (2009) study, students were introduced to self-assessment. They were given two self-assessment forms. Both forms were written in Swedish to avoid any misunderstanding on the students' part. The first form consisted of a variety of questions regarding the classroom writing assignment. The students had to indicate how satisfied they were with their specific writing skill such as spelling, grammar, vocabulary and so on. They also were asked to indicate whether they could improve their writing or if they had been able to identify mistakes in their writing. The second self-assessment form consisted of multiple choice questions. It was completed in the classroom after the 'National Test of English'. Students had to indicate their predicted grades for their classroom assignments and for national test in English in both self-assessment forms. The actual writing took place both in the classroom and/or at home.

Wang's (2007) study started differently as the students and teachers were invited to offer their own opinions about a basic set of assessment criteria and not imposing the criteria on them. Each criterion is then rearranged in a descending order according to the number of times it occurred in the students' 'contribution' (p, 305). Students and teachers were allowed to subsequently add further criteria which were not included in the list. After that, students wrote three compositions, two in class and one at home. The first composition was free writing. The second composition was the revision of the first draft which was done at home

with the assessment rubric and had to be returned in 3 to 4 weeks. They also wrote their self-reflection on these two drafts which they had revised. The third composition was a timed essay which was written in class.

Participants in Brown's (2005) study completed the relevant modules, including all materials and exercises, at home and with no time constraints. On completion of this task, the students met with the researchers and were asked to write a script in response to the extended writing task that marked the end of the completed module. The students were also given marked and annotated examples of texts, where these samples provided explanation of the marking criteria as well as illustrating the standard expected. Students self-assessed their own performances by comparing their work with these samples.

Aly (2005) divided students into two groups (i.e. control and experimental). Students in both groups were asked to write an essay on a given topic. Then, the students in the experimental group were trained to use self-assessment. The control group followed normal writing procedure. After that, students in both groups were asked to revise their writing at home. The students in the experimental group used the self-assessment sheet to revise their writing and the control group did not.

Regardless of the different approaches to self-assessment in the classroom, what is notable in these studies is that in the majority of cases there appears to be a positive effect on student writing.

2.5.2 Effect of self-assessment on writing

Most studies presented in Table 2.3 demonstrate that self-assessment can have a positive effect on students' writing. For example, Oscarson (2009) provides empirical results that illustrate the positive outcome of the implementation of self-assessment in the EFL classroom context. The study looked at how self-assessment can have a positive and far-reaching effect on the development of lifelong language learning skills with EFL students. Although Oscarson's study emphasises the positive effect of self-assessment on students' writing, it does not demonstrate exactly how students improved their writing and which aspects of their writing improved. It only shows that students focus on grammar and spelling when self-assessing. Likewise, none of the studies presented in Table 2.3, apart from Aly (2005), indicate which aspects of students' writing improved as a result of self-assessment. Aly's (2005) study shows that the students improved all the aspects of their writing significantly but

without showing what the actual revision of each aspect was. For example, she reports that the students' introduction improved, but does not describe how the students did so. She used a purely quantitative approach for data analysis, which I believe has limitations in the analysis of self-assessment of revision of content and organisation because improvement in meaning cannot be typically be quantified. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the effect of self-assessment on different aspects of students' writing using mainly a qualitative approach. This allows me to investigate more closely what happens during revision when students are prompted by a self-assessment sheet. This study aims to add to the growing body of empirical studies to test the effectiveness of self-assessment in an EFL writing classroom.

All research studies about self-assessment emphasise the importance of training students on how to self-assess. Self-discovery techniques are in general much more effective than errors being corrected by teachers and advantageous as they assist students to increase reliance on their own abilities to scrutinise and correct their own errors (Lalande, 1984; Bates, Lane, & Lange, 1993; Ferris, 1995). This idea assumes that even novice student writers can develop the ability to self-assess their work, thereby developing an ability that they can use outside the classroom. This implies that indirect techniques, such as self-error locating, offer students the chance to improve their general precision in later drafts as well as other future assignments (Fathman & Whalley, 1990). Janssen-van Dieten (1992, p. 220) studied the effects of self-assessment training on adult learners of the Dutch language. She concludes that 'training can have a positive effect on the quality of self-assessment, provided it is conducted in the way intended.' Her hypothesis centred on the importance of the teacher's conviction in the method. Janssen-van Dieten (1992) believes that it could be seen as a condition of the success of self-assessment for the teacher to have a personal confidence in student independence. Other work, such as studies by Sadler (1989) and Taras (2001, 2002, 2003), explore that teacher feedback is the most vital element in the process of student self-assessment.

Taras (2001, p. 605) introduces three specific elements to assist in student self-assessment being conducted in an effective manner: firstly, to include summative graded writings; secondly, to ensure teacher feedback so mistakes are understood and identified before self-assessment takes place; and lastly, for students to obtain their grades after formative self-assessment. In Taras' study, the students wrote a piece of translation, which was marked and handed back to them without grades, followed by group teacher feedback, before self-

assessment was undertaken. The students were instructed to evaluate their writing against a particular criterion and to describe how they could improve, and finally to award themselves a grade. Once this section of assessment was complete, the teacher commented on students' abilities to assess in relation to the criteria, and graded them. In this type of study the method of self-assessment is highly reliant on teacher feedback as it is this feedback that guides the student's own assessment. In terms of student opinion on this method, the only criticism they had was in regards to the self-grading section. They felt they did not have the appropriate understanding or awareness to correctly carry out this element. On the positive side, the students felt feedback and self-assessment helped them to fully comprehend criteria.

A further study by Taras (2003) illustrates that 'minimal integrated tutor feedback' results in the students reaching a higher state of autonomy in which to contemplate their mistakes and to comprehend the assessment method, particularly the criteria and feedback. It also shows that the students were able to see where their strengths lay pre-grading. In her conclusion, Taras (2003, p. 561-562) writes that 'self-assessment without tutor feedback cannot help students to be aware of all their errors' and 'student self-assessment with integrated tutor feedback is one efficient means of helping students overcome unrealistic expectations and focus on their achievement rather than on the input required to produce their work.'

The research studies reviewed above considered the benefits of self-assessment in a writing classroom. Of more relevance is likely to be the issues of how a written task by EFL students can be effectively and accurately self-assessed, which is the topic of this thesis. In this respect, there are few studies that address this issue. Brown (2005, p.185) states that 'there is little written on global self-assessment of task-based performance'. However, Brown utilises previous annotated student writings to allow students to compare the annotated text to their own texts. The annotations include notes on linguistic elements such as content, structure and organisation. Brown states that this technique was 'both reliable and useful' (p.174) in terms of self-assessment of a writing task and also in the understanding of linguistic skill. The students involved in the study expressed in the interview phase how the use of annotated writing allowed them to see where issues lay in their own work. They felt that the comparison of writing helped them to see the variety of linguistic skills involved whilst also giving them the ability to correct their own errors. Other students felt frustration at their inability to carry out self-correction through this method; however, Brown saw this as a personal improvement for those particular students as they were now aware of how to self-assess even if they were not yet at the stage where they could successfully carry it out.

It is important to note that a major reason for the implementation of self-assessment in the EFL writing classroom is to ensure students learn the ability to draft and revise their work (McCarthy et al, 1985; Boud & Falchikov, 2006; Bardine & Fulton, 2008) and, via this revision, produce a higher quality final written text. The act of imparting this skill to students, particularly early on in their writing education, will give students an ability to reflect on their own writing. Within the umbrella term of self-assessment fall a number of particular exercises that can be undertaken by students, including *responding to drafts*, *self-correcting*, and *self-monitoring* (Flower et al, 1986; Hayes, 1996). All these exercises encourage students to regularly check and make corrections to their own work in accordance with instructions or cues. Raimes (1984, p. 149) likewise notes that '[w]hat students really need more than anything else is to develop the ability to read their own writing and to examine it critically, to learn how to express their meaning fluently, logically, and accurately'. She also believes that students need to be able to find and correct their own mistakes. If a learner was aware of self-assessment and tried to learn from his own failure, s/he would receive more chances of overcoming difficulties in learning than others who did not care why they failed. The techniques of reading closely and analyzing the writing develop students' critical skills in their own writing.

In order to help students develop the skills of self-assessment, a few techniques have been proposed in the literature. These are reviewed in the next section.

2.5.3 Self-assessment techniques

There are different techniques and forms used in implementing self-assessment in the classroom. This section sheds some light on some of these techniques which will provide some background needed to understand the development of the self-assessment sheet used in this thesis. I review several different techniques and forms and account for their relevance in my research. I point out why some were not adopted in my study and explain why some others were more useful in the design of the self-assessment sheet used in this research.

1- Student progress card

Student progress cards, as described by Oskarsson (1984), are tools of self-assessment that are used in many different educational contexts across the world. The progress cards allow for the definition of short term goals which are in turn grouped in graded blocks at different levels of complexity. Once the student feels they are able to perform the defined task, skill or

activity then they tick this off in the learner column. The teacher column can be ticked once the teacher is satisfied that the task has been performed successfully by the student. The progress cards themselves encourage teacher and student participation and are used over a set period of time such as the course duration (Coombe & Canning, 2002). Given that I was only looking at one writing activity, this would not have been a useful way to measure progress in my study. A sample follows:

Ability	Student	Teacher
Read and understand texts on a travel theme		
Write an itinerary for an upcoming vacation		

Figure 2.4 Progress card (Coombe & Canning, 2002)

2- Learner diaries and dialog journals

Oskarsson (1984) and Dickenson (1987) both proposed the idea of learner diaries and dialog journals as a way to allow systematic self-assessment by students over a length of time. In these diaries or journals the students are encouraged to write freely on what they have learned, how they feel they have mastered the content and how they plan to utilise their new skills in the future. I am investigating a single writing activity, so this method was not used.

3- Audio-visual aids

In the age of technology there are a multitude of ways in which teaching and learning can be recorded and audio-visual aids are useful in capturing a variety of aspects of the learning process. Recording, for example, can be used as a means of self-assessment as students can record themselves or each other. In listening back to these the students are able to make assessments of their oral language skills. If both audio and visual aspects are used then students are also able to assess their body language (paralinguistic) skills in combination with their linguistic skills. Since I was looking at writing skills, recording would not have been an ideal way of self-assessment. Additionally, the cultural context of Libya would have made it difficult to get permission for any type of recording.

4- Rating scales, checklists and questionnaire

The use of rating scales, checklists and questionnaires is a popular practice within self-assessment and are used in order for learners to assess their perceived ability and language proficiency. As seen in a number of studies such as Coombe (1992) and Oskarsson (1984) the learners use 'ability statements' for example "I can read and understand newspaper articles intended for native speakers of the language".

A number of different self- assessment forms have been used in different studies related to writing (See Appendix 19 for three different self-assessment sheets/ forms used in other studies). The self-assessment sheet in the present study provides students with a structured way of reflecting on, and critically evaluating, their own written work. It usually breaks the essay down into its constituent parts and invites students to assess their performance in each constituent part. They (e.g. Aly, 2005; Diab; 2008; Honsa, 2013) usually ask students to reflect on their writing on areas such as content, organisation, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics.

Instructions and criteria included in self-assessment forms can be long and detailed or it can be simple, short and focus on a particular area as suggested by Harris (1997, p.16). He indicated that:

'Number and complexity of criteria depend on both level and age of students. For young, lower-level students the questions can be expressed more simply: Does it look nice? Is it interesting? Are there lots of mistakes?'

As mentioned above, the length and complexity of the criteria in self-assessment sheets used in writing, usually depends on students' level of competency. It also depends on what teachers need to address in the writing lesson. For example, Harris (1997) suggests that teachers can design a simple self-assessment form using a list of common mistakes made by the class and that this could be utilised as a checklist for self-editing. Another example of short and simple self-editing checklist is used by Kasule and Lunga (2010), where they used a table and stated all the criteria that students have to meet. Their table also listed areas needing attention, such as spelling, omissions, repetitions, sentence fragments, run-on sentences, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, agreement, parallelism, mixed structures, misuse of the comma in place of and/but/or/so/transitions. Self-assessment forms used by Kasule and Lunga (2010), Diab (2010) and Oscarson (2009) in their studies, likewise focused on the aspect of language and mechanics in writing. Diab (2008) provided her students with detailed

self-assessment forms where students have to check each part of their essays. The following is an excerpt from the two assessment forms she used in her study for self-assessment and peer-assessment:

<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes relevant background highlighting the effects of the problem _____ • Provides a clear-one sentence claim introducing the problem _____ <p>Body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discusses the causes of the problem _____ • Provides relevant supporting details _____ <p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restates the claim (the problem) _____ • Sums up the main argument (solution) _____ <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>What are the specific areas that need to be improved?</p> <p>_____</p>
--

Figure 2.5 excerpts from self-editing form (Diab, 2008, p.156)

In the above self-assessment form, students have to tick or write what applies to their writing in each part of their essay. The self-assessment form was divided into content, organisation and conclusion. The following are two excerpts of two forms of assessment used to revise writing for:

<p>Content (2points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph 1 introduces the topic and includes relevant background information. • Paragraph 4 includes the third main reason for the writer's argument _____ and • The conclusion sums up the argument _____ and offers closure. _____ <p>Organization (2points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each paragraph starts with a topic sentence. _____ • Paragraphs are well- connected using transitional signals. _____ <p>Credibility (2points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The essay has logical fallacies. _____
--

Figure 2.6 excerpts from editing form (Diab 2008, pp.158-159)

<p>Organization</p> <p>1. Does the essay have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion? Yes/No (Circle one)</p> <p>How many paragraphs does the essay have?</p> <p>How many paragraphs are in the body?</p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>2. Do the general statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give background information? <p>3. Does the thesis statement state a clearly focused main idea for the whole essay? How many general statements are there?</p> <p>Is this a funnel introduction? Yes/No</p>
--

Copy the thesis statement below :

Body

4. Does each body paragraph have

- a clearly stated topic sentence with a main idea?
- good development with adequate supporting details (facts, example, or quotation)?

Conclusion

2. Does the conclusion

- restate your thesis or summarise your main points?

What kind of conclusion does the essay have?

____ summary of the main points or

____ Grammar and mechanics

6. Are quotations used correctly? Check each quotation for commas, capital letters and quotation marks.

7. Are commas used where necessary?

Figure 2.7 Excerpts from self-assessment form by Honsa (2013, pp.55-56)

These forms encourage students to reflect on their writing in the different sections and think about whether they have achieved the identified points.

Some other studies such as the one conducted by Javaherbakhsh (2010) in Iran used rating a checklist. The checklist assessed students' ability in several components of their writing: introduction, body, and conclusion (organisation); logical development of ideas (content); structure; mechanics; style and quality of expression. These aspects were assessed by the students on a five point Likert scale.

Regarding marks and rating scales, some studies included rating and marks in the assessment sheets such as Mutsuno (2009); Aly (2005); Diab (2008) and Bannister and Baker (2000). Other studies did not include ratings and marks, such as Harris (1997) and Miao et al. (2006). The following excerpts of self-assessment forms with rating scales are taken from Matsuno (2009) and Aly (2005) in order.

• Introduction & Thesis statement _____	1 2 3 4 5 6
• Body & Topic sentence _____	1 2 3 4 5 6
• Conclusion _____	1 2 3 4 5 6

Figure 2.8 Excerpts from essay evaluation sheet by Matsuno (2009, pp.99-100)

Content		
Introduction		
The introduction of my essay includes a statement of the essay		
a. Yes	b. To some extent	c. No
2	1	0
Organisation		

The opening is written in logical sequence						
b. Yes		b. To some extent		c. No		
2		1		0		
Language						
Language component	No mistakes 2 marks	From 1-3 mistakes 1.5 marks	From 4-6 mistakes 1 mark	More than 7 mistakes 0.5 mark	correction	Score
						2

Figure 2.9 Excerpts from self-assessment form by Aly (2005, pp.122-124)

Having looked at different forms of self-assessment sheets it is observed that most forms reviewed have addressed the common elements of any essay i.e. content, organisation, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics. These elements are then usually labelled as *introduction*, *body paragraph* and *conclusion*, in the self-assessment sheets. The focus of the self-assessment sheet is on how these components are organised and how they fulfil their functions in a particular essay.

It should be mentioned that if students are asked to practise a new type of skill, such as self-assessment, for the first time, it is beneficial to start with some form of explanation. Asking students to complete a self-assessment sheet will not, in itself, improve learning. If self-review is to become a central part of the learning experience, students need realistic practical advice about why and how to self-assess. Using a guide sheet is sometimes helpful in highlighting the main benefits of self-reviewing one's work. It also helps to talk students through each section of the self-assessment form (Bannister and Baker, 2000).

2.6 Conclusion

In the present study, I have taken into consideration several of the studies reported above. I have used Aly (2005) and Diab (2008) as a guide in designing the self-assessment sheet. In Section 3.6.2, I have considered students' abilities and proficiency levels when constructing the 'ability statements'. I have also followed Bannister and Baker's (2000) advice on talking students through the self-assessment sheet (details provided in Chapter 3, section 3.6.2). Overall, this chapter has provided a theoretical framework which will be used in Chapter 3 to explain the methodological considerations of the study and in Chapter 4 to shed light on the analysis of the results of this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Introduction

The main goal of this study is to establish whether using the self-assessment technique has a positive effect on inexperienced EFL students' writing performance. If a positive effect is established, the study would recommend that this is introduced in writing classes in the curriculum of Libyan universities, especially for those students who are majoring in English. Typically, as discussed in earlier chapters, the method of teaching writing to this group has been primarily product-oriented.

This chapter is a detailed discussion of the methodology employed in the present study. It begins with a discussion of the difficulties faced in collecting the data because this has implications for how the instruments were designed, piloted and used in the study. The section on difficulties in data collection also lays the groundwork for explaining the procedures followed in collecting the data. The chapter also presents the educational context and participants of the study in greater detail. I will report on the details of the main study and the chapter then concludes with the data analysis procedures and a description of the data analysis in greater detail.

This chapter starts with discussing the methodological difficulties encountered in the process of data collection in Libya.

3.2 Difficulties in data collection

There were a number of limitations and complications that were encountered in the course of conducting this research. These are outlined in the next few sections.

Three universities were selected as venues where this research could be conducted. My initial course of action was to pilot the study, test the procedures in the first university (University A). It was also my plan to collect data from the remaining two (University B and University C). After that, I had permissions from Heads of the English Departments of all three universities to collect data.

At university A, which was my first choice for piloting the research tools, I met with the head of the department and I was introduced to some lecturers. I was promised a meeting with a group of students and a lecture hall to conduct my pilot study. Unfortunately, after more than two weeks of waiting, this never materialised. After repeatedly asking for cooperation, I was given lengthy written essays from previous exercises. I was told that it was not possible to organise any meetings with the students, despite them having initially agreed to the full procedure.

At University B, I made some progress. I was able to meet one of the lecturers and organised directly with her to help me. We had a meeting where she asked for the procedures to be explained to her. After I had explained the procedures in detail, she informed me that students at that particular time were very busy with their exams preparation and that she could not afford to forfeit a lesson in order for the study to take place. The lecturer suggested that she use the writing task I had told her about (i.e. effects of smoking) as part of students' exercises in class. She added that it would be better if she handed out the work herself to the students so that they would treat the task seriously. However, although I had stressed the need for them to redraft their work, this did not take place. According to the lecturer, they were too busy to attend a session that had been previously planned and agreed to. I was also told that the students would not be able to participate in the rest of the study.

Given my previous experiences, at University C, I stressed the importance of meeting the students and the lecturers in person. I felt that I would then be able to explain to them the aim of the study and the procedures (specifically, that they would be required to redraft their work). I was able to meet 20 students and conducted the training session and invited them to submit revised drafts. Unfortunately, only 3 students revised their drafts. The reason for this was due to the fact that it was very close to the exam period and many of the students were not required to attend classes during the period leading up to the exams.

Given the circumstances, I was placed in a position where I had to pursue my objectives at a fourth University (D). At University D, I was eventually able to conduct the pilot study to my satisfaction (see Appendix 1 c for University D permission). At this university too, the exams were upcoming, but I still had enough time to conduct the study (first draft, a session explaining the self-assessment sheet and followed by the collection of a second draft). I had planned interviews with the students which were scheduled for a period after their exams

(giving me enough time to analyse some of the data), but unfortunately these could not take place, as by then, the political climate in Libya was fairly serious and the university closed as soon as the examinations were over.

Given the volatile situation, I was compelled to return to the UK, as staying any longer might have meant being stranded in the country. I planned at that point in time, that I would return to Libya and meet the students when the new semester began. Seventeen days after my return to the UK, war broke out. I have been unable to return to Libya since then.

The main drawback of the situation was that I was forced to use the data I had collected from the pilot study and to utilise that data for the actual study. As a consequence, the self-assessment sheet and the post-feedback sheet were not piloted. However, I did explain each question in detail and the students that I met in Libya did undertake a training exercise (detailed in the next section) on the self-assessment sheet.

The procedures are summarised in the table below:

Universities	University A	University B	University C	University D
Number of students involved	10	20	20	100
Teachers involved	Two teachers	One teacher	One teacher	One teacher
Type of writing	A paper (research paper)	Essay	One paragraph/essay	Multi-paragraph essay
Person who presented the instructions and explanation of the study	Teacher	Teacher	Researcher	Researcher
Time and place allocated for the first draft	10 days / first draft was written at home	80 minutes / first draft was written in the classroom	3 days / first draft was written at home	6 weeks
Researcher and student contact	Researcher did not have contact with the students	Researcher did not have contact with the students	Researcher had contact with the students	Researcher had contact with the students
Feedback form	Not returned	Returned	Only 3 returned	All returned
Correction of writing	Not corrected	Corrected by the teacher	Not corrected	Corrected

Self-assessment sheet	Not completed	Completed and returned to the researcher	Only 3 completed and returned to the researcher	All completed and returned to the researcher
Language(s) used by the teacher	English	English and Arabic	English	English
Handing in a revised draft	None	None / only first draft which was written using self-assessment in the class	3 revised drafts returned	100drafts returned
Reason for not completing the task according to the researcher's instructions	Not known	Teacher gave students instruction to finish everything at one time	Students were busy preparing for their final exams in that semester.	Not known

Table 3.1 Summary of initial procedures

In the next few sections, I explain the procedures around the collection of data for the pilot study. However, given that the pilot study became my main study by virtue of the political circumstances in Libya, in the following sections, I will refer to what was meant to have been my pilot study as the main study.

3.2.1 The study

The duration of the study was two months. During that time, the students wrote three essays and applied the self-assessment process twice. Once during the training session and then when the actual study was conducted. The study was limited to 100 students at the English department at Zawya University. While this might seem like a fairly good number of students, the proficiency levels of the students meant that the writing produced is relatively small in comparison to other studies on L2 writing. Each student typically produced a 160 – 300 word essay.

3.3 The context of the study

Due to the difficulties mentioned in 3.2, there were two different contexts in the study i.e. Libya and UK. Both contexts are discussed below.

3.3.1 The Libyan context

The University of Zawya was the main university where the study was conducted. It is classed as one of the better universities in Libya with a good reputation. The university is situated in the third largest city in Eastern Libya. The Administration Department at the university had an open attitude to educational research and was of great assistance in helping me as a researcher to gain access to various facilities in the university.

My choice of a Libyan university, at which to conduct this study, was due to a strong desire to incorporate new and democratic ideas into the education system in Libya. The general objectives outlined by the National Report of the General People's Committee of Education (henceforth, GPCE) about the development of education in Libya (GPCE, 2008) also suggests that innovative methods should be introduced into the Libyan education system. The GPCE, the equivalent of the Ministry of Education, is the governmental body responsible for the management of the overall education system in Libya. This report was submitted at session 48 of the International Conference on Education in Geneva (25-28 November 2008). One of the objectives is presented below.

Objective 9: Provide and support new types of education and enable students to discover their abilities and acquire knowledge through self-learning (GPCE, 2008, p.4-5).

The concept of using the self-assessment technique is probably quite novel in the Libyan setting. In most Libyan universities, the teacher is the only source of information and controller in the classroom. This new technique of learning has immense potential to enhance self and autonomous learning if used and applied properly. The receptive nature of most of the people that I contacted in my attempts at setting up the study, demonstrated that to a large extent, there was considerable interest and support for moving towards incorporating new and innovative ways to teach and to learn.

3.3.2 The UK context

Due to the minimal number of studies conducted on the teaching of writing in Libya, I had to rely on a questionnaire to gain information regarding how writing was taught in Libya. It would have been useful to have conducted this in Libya, but being unable to return, I conducted the questionnaire in the UK. As a result, the participants in the UK were not the same candidates who participated in Libya. These participants provided useful insight into

how writing is taught in Libya and provided evidence for some of my anecdotal experiences of being a teacher of writing in Libya.

3.4 Participants of the study

Participants of the current study were divided into two groups. The first group was made up of participants in Libya. The first group participated in the experiment related to self-assessment and revision and I collected the writing samples and post-feedback forms (Appendix 8) from this group. The second group of participants were in the UK. They only participated insofar as to complete the general questionnaire on the teaching of writing in Libya (see Appendix 7). All issues related to these participants are discussed below.

3.4.1 Participants in Libya

There were 100 participants involved in the study. All participants were of the same language background. Their mother tongue was Arabic and they were expected to write in English in all their courses in the English department.

These participants in Libya were involved in not only writing the assignments, but also revising what they had written, with the aid the self-assessment sheet (used by the experimental group) and by completing the post-study feedback form. This post-study feedback form was then used to elicit the opinions of students in the experimental group regarding the effect of using the self-assessment technique to revise their writing.

The participants were all students in their fourth year of study, majoring in English. They had taken three writing courses. They were Writing I, Writing II, and Writing III, in their previous terms of study in the English department at Zawya University in Libya. Having taken these three courses, students were expected to have a reasonable ability to write in English. Despite completing three writing courses, it was my observation that even fourth year students were having some difficulty in writing competently in English. This was also a view shared by those who had previously researched this area (El-Aswad, 2002; Suwaed, 2011). This low standard among students is also partly due to the fact that the teaching of English writing in Libya is not to a high standard, as evidenced by the questionnaire results. This is attributed largely to the difficulties that the teachers themselves face in the teaching of writing. In her recent study, Suwaed (2011) investigated writing teachers' cognition about teaching writing to Libyan students. Of the 14 teachers she interviewed, 13 mentioned that

the low proficiency level of the students was what placed severe limitation on teachers' ability to teach effectively. Some teachers said that almost all students had difficulty in various aspects of writing skills. These deficiencies were in areas such as capitalisation, punctuation marks, spelling, creating a simple structure of a sentence, conveying meaning effectively, vocabulary, grammar and organisation (Suwaed, 2011,p.220-256).

Although the participants of this study were about to graduate at the time the data was collected, they would be considered inexperienced writers, as they were not proficient in English.

3.4.2 Participants in the UK

The participants in the UK were selected after the study was conducted in Libya, as there was insufficient evidence in the literature which explained the situation of how writing was taught in Libya. Thirty-two Libyan participants who lived and studied in the UK were involved in completing the questionnaire, which was used to provide additional information on the contextual situation in which the study was conducted. All these participants had graduated from various universities in Libya during the course of the last 20 years.

3.5 Ethical issues

This section provides an overview of the ethical issues that surfaced as well as the initial procedures that were undertaken before collection of the data for the study in Libya.

First of all, I obtained a letter from my supervisor (see Appendix 1a) showing the topic of the present study and the time-frame within which I needed to collect the data for this study in Libya. This letter was used to allow me access to various universities in Libya. Students in Libya were asked to sign consent forms prior to participating in the study, as did the students in the UK (Appendix 3 & 4 for consent forms).

3.6 Selection and design of research tools

To answer the three research questions of the current study, three research instruments were employed: written assignments, self-assessment sheets and a post-study feedback form. An additional research instrument was used to provide background information in the form of a questionnaire. This research study uses different research instruments and procedures. Gay and Airasian (2003) indicate that employment of a range of research instruments and procedures would enhance the reliability and validity of the conclusions that are drawn from

any particular research. The table below (3.2) illustrates each research question in relation to the instruments used.

No.	Research question	Research instruments	Participants
1-	Do inexperienced EFL students who self-assess their writing engage in revision more than those who do not self-assess?	Students' writing/ original and revised drafts of both groups (experimental & control).	40 participants (Top 10 and bottom 10 from both groups experimental & control)
2-	Does self-assessment enable inexperienced EFL students to improve the quality of their revised writing?		
3-	What are the students' opinions of self-assessment as a revision strategy of essay writing?	Post-study feedback form.	70 students from the experimental group
	—	Questionnaire	34 Libyan participants living and studying in the UK

Table 3.2 Research questions vis-à-vis research instruments, participants and the number of students that responded to each question.

3.6.1 Written assignments

The core of this thesis is on writing. Two written assignments were given to students in this study for two different purposes.

First assignment: students were asked to write a paragraph on 'The Effects of Smoking'. This assignment served as a tool to measure the students' level of writing proficiency. Weigle (2002) indicates that in teaching FL/SL writing, it is important to evaluate the learners' writing ability. To do so, Hughes (2003, p.83) states that 'the best way to test people's writing ability is to get them to write'. Therefore, data collected at this stage is not reported in the findings of this study as the exercise was undertaken solely to assess the students' writing abilities and to help in the design of the self-assessment sheet. This piece of writing helped me to determine whether I needed to adjust any of the elements included in the self-assessment sheet. It should be noted that these students had not been introduced to the concept of self-assessment. They also had not been divided into control and experimental groups at this stage.

Second assignment: This was going to be the main piece of work that the students would write two drafts for. The students were asked to write an essay of at least three paragraphs on

a topic entitled ‘Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town’ (see Appendix 5 for writing instruction). The topic was selected after discussion with the students’ writing teacher. It was felt that it was a suitable subject that would encourage the writing of a longer essay comprising of a number of paragraphs, as opposed to a single paragraph. This topic encouraged a ‘compare and contrast’ approach where students would be able to write one or two bodied paragraphs to discuss the similarities and differences between the two localities. This type of writing was covered in the writing syllabus. When deciding on a topic for the composition, it was vital that a subject be selected about which all writers would possess sufficient knowledge to complete a piece of writing (Horowitz, 1991). Furthermore, Reid and Kroll (1995) reinforce this concept by affirming that the topic content should be accessible to all writers involved and should only call upon existing knowledge of the writers. This is deemed necessary in order for students to produce an essay that consists of different ideas to see how they introduce, organise and link these ideas together. Moreover, the teacher confirmed that the students had not written about this topic during the semester, thereby avoiding the risk of the students memorising wording and, more importantly, ensuring that the final writing is a true and accurate reflection of their writing abilities. Two drafts of the assignment were produced by each student in each group. These were a first draft and a revised draft. The total number of essays in the data was 200 essays. These drafts generated the main data to be analysed for the current study.

3.6.2 The self-assessment sheet

The second instrument used in this study was the self-assessment sheet (see Appendix 6), which consisted of information related to how the students could revise their writing. In this section, I will discuss the rationale for using the self-assessment sheet and the way it was designed. A detailed explanation of each part of the self-assessment sheet (i.e. content, organisation and language) will also be provided, followed by explanation of the final version of the self-assessment sheet.

3.6.2.1 Rationale behind and design of the self-assessment sheet

I took into consideration the following points when designing the self-assessment sheet:

- The areas that teachers focus on when they teach writing.

Having been both a student and a teacher in the Libyan educational system, I had the benefit of a dual perspective; the perspective of both a writing teacher and a student. As a university student in Libya, I was taught how to write essays in class. Teachers explained what a paragraph is, how to write an introduction, body and conclusion before assigning us with a

topic to write about. The same method of teaching writing is still followed today in most Libyan universities (for more information see, 4.2). I have also used the topics that students in the Department of English would normally cover in their syllabus every year (see Appendix 25).

- The criteria which are most helpful to students (i.e. content, organisation, language and mechanics).

In his book of self-assessment, Foster (1996, p.65) argues that '[t]eachers and students should select criteria carefully since revision criterion is universally applicable. They should determine appropriate criteria by considering writing variables and personal writing goals'.

Therefore, an essential first step in designing a scoring procedure or any other way to assess writing, for that matter, is to determine the criteria to be used in the assessment (Weigle, 2002). In the present self-assessment sheet, criteria used are intended to hone the learners' ability to produce a good piece of writing during the course of revision. The design of the self-assessment sheet was based on the criteria included in many self-assessment forms and scoring rubrics previously used for assessing writing (Jacobs et al, 1981; Weir, 1990; Hamp-Lyons, 1991; White & McGovern, 1994; Foster, 1996; Weigle, 2002; Aly, 2005; scoring rubric for academic writing course in Miaoa, Badger and Zhenc, 2006; Diab, 2008; Biber, Nekrasova& Horn, 2011). Most of these studies indicate that content, organisation, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics are the most commonly-used criteria in writing assessment rubrics, forms and revision checklists (see 2.5.3, p.54). Taking this into consideration, I included these criteria in the self-assessment sheet of the present study, apart from vocabulary. I left vocabulary out as I was also taking into account what the students were taught during writing lessons. In writing lessons where this data was collected, vocabulary was not taught as a separate component, but content, organisation and language were elements that were constantly revisited in class.

- Textbooks and research

I read commercially available textbooks on how to write an essay and research studies on the teaching of writing (paying specific attention to advice on writing introductions, developing an argument, conclusions etc.). I also read several studies on how to design self-assessment sheets. This is detailed in a later section in this chapter (see 3.8.1), where I discuss the method of analysis.

In designing the self-assessment sheet, I took into consideration the scoring system used by teachers in Libya developed by the teachers themselves. What I did, was to estimate the marks that the teachers would have given to these components individually, and then used those figures to help me guide formulating the self-assessment sheet. In many ways, I modelled the self-assessment sheet very closely on Aly (2005), who divided her self-assessment sheet into three sections i.e. content, organisation and language. The same division was adopted in the present study. There are researchers who only focus on language such as Oscarson (2009) and Diab (2010), but my design differs from these, as I had a wider focus in mind.

Taking the students' competency level into consideration, the self-assessment sheet that I designed was made shorter than that of Aly's (2005). The students in Aly's research were of a higher proficiency level – intermediate to advance. Aly, in her self-assessment sheet, included five questions in the content section and four in the organisation section. I included three statements in each section, so that my students, who were less proficient in English, would be able to complete the self-assessment sheet successfully. The language section was designed in the form of a table where the students were able to count their mistakes and assign a score to each criterion i.e. spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, subject-verb agreement, consistent verb-tense and word order. Some criteria were similar to Aly's, such as word order, subject-verb agreement and correct verb tense, whilst others were different. For example, in her self-assessment sheet (see Appendix 19 b), Aly (2005) included all aspects of word mechanics in one section. On the other hand, I divided them into capitalisation, spelling and punctuation. I chose to do this as spelling, punctuation and capitalisation are the three aspects which are dealt with in great detail in writing lessons in Libya. When I conducted the pre-test to determine students' language proficiency levels, these stood out as viable areas for significant improvement.

The self-assessment sheet was made to be as accessible as possible and was also designed to highlight areas of weaknesses in the students' writing. I was also mindful that it should be simple and that it should avoid causing any form of confusion. In order to achieve this, I started out by designing the self-assessment sheet to be as short and as possible. In addition, a translation was provided, along with explanations pertaining to the self-assessment sheet criteria in the students' first language, Arabic. I also set out to translate every section of the self-assessment sheet and to explain its use. A detailed explanation of how to use the self-

assessment sheet and its role in helping to improve the students' writing over time was also conducted in the classroom (see Appendix 14& 15). This was done to avoid any misunderstanding of how to complete the self-assessment sheet on the learners' part. Previous research identifies this as good practice. Oskarsson (1980) and Oscarson (2009) translated their self-assessment forms into Swedish for their Swedish students that went on to encourage a very good response from the students.

Having taken into consideration the criteria introduced by previous researchers, I proceeded to design the self- assessment sheet used in this study (see Appendix6).

3.6.2.2 Finalised self-assessment sheet

The self-assessment sheet comprises of three sections. They are content, organisation and language. This to some extent reflects the sequence of most grids (Jacobs et al, 1981; Weir, 1990) that are used to score writing. By revising their writing, learners are firstly encouraged to reconsider their ideas. They are then encouraged to give thought to how these ideas are organised before embarking on editing the language mistakes using the criteria set out in the self-assessment sheet. I have, as far as possible, attempted to make the sections as short and comprehensive as possible. Firstly, this is so that the students do not become de-motivated at the outset when provided with a long form, and in addition to having to complete the writing exercise itself. Secondly, to ensure that the students' proficiency level was taken into consideration (as most students wrote short essays, a long self-assessment sheet would not have been appropriate). Each section was presented on a separate page in order to help students revise and score each section one at a time.

1- Content section:

The content section of the self-assessment sheet consists of three statements. It is in the form of a checklist, where students are required to identify the presence or absence of aspects related to content. This section covers elements such as the effectiveness of an introduction, body paragraph and conclusion. Additionally, it clarifies, that the section is not concerned with the organisation of these three elements but rather, their content. For example, when I assess the introduction, I am looking at whether it orientates the reader effectively to the topic and whether or not it states the purpose clearly. Similarly, the body paragraph(s) is concerned with developing the main idea in an appropriate way by providing examples, furnishing evidence or by reasoning. Lastly, the conclusion should summarise the main points and give

closure to the writing. These are elements that are taught in their writing lessons. Students will have to check if they have presented these elements effectively in their writing before assigning themselves a score in accordance with the scoring key provided. The scoring key assigns two points if the item considered is present, one point if the student thinks that this item is present to a certain extent (i.e. there is mention of a topic, but the purpose is not clear), and no points if the item is absent. Determining an accurate score that corresponds to the writing performance in question can be confusing to some EFL learners in relation to the content aspect of writing. Consequently the content section of the self-assessment sheet is in the form of a checklist to minimise perplexity often faced by EFL learners when required to assign a numerical score to the content of their writing. This is an aspect of the self-assessment sheet that I was hoping to reconsider after running the pilot study, but unfortunately I was unable to do so (see section 3.2).

2- Organisation section:

This section is similar to the content section in that it is in the form of a checklist and consists of three statements. In the organisation section, students are required to check the presence of organisation-related items and give an appropriate score. This section covers elements such as paragraphing, logic and cohesion through the use of transition words. The organisation section is intended to show the students' ability to organise their writing so that it may be read smoothly through the use of transitions.

3- Language section:

The form taken by the content and organisation section of the self-assessment sheet is different in structure to the language section. The language element comprises of a rubric that necessitates a score to be assigned to a defined scale. The scale ranges from 2 points to 0.5 points depending on the number of mistakes identified by the students in their writing. As students made hundreds of mistakes in mechanics, it was rather difficult to deduct marks for each mistake, considering the small range of 0.5-2. I therefore grouped the number of the mistakes. For example, 2 marks are awarded to writing that has no mistakes in the criterion in question. 1.5 marks are given to writing that has 1-3 mistakes. Those that have 4-6 mistakes are awarded 1 mark and those that have more than 7 mistakes receive 0.5 mark. The language section includes criteria relating to language mistakes such as spelling, capitalisation, punctuation, subject-verb agreement, consistent verb-tense and word order.

In addition to the above three sections of the self-assessment sheet, space was provided for students to write any comments they may have had, regarding their writing and areas that they had identified for further improvement. The criteria included could also be used in different contexts by other EFL learners, but with appropriate alterations made by teachers to allow for learners' needs as well as the course writing goals. It is important that the self-assessment sheets are designed based on what learners have been taught. The sheets ought to be contextually created so that the learners may be in a position to achieve maximum benefit.

Although the students score their writing in the self-assessment sheet, I did not include this with the data of the current study, as there was no piloting for the scoring grid used in the self-assessment.

3.6.3 The post-study feedback form

In order to answer research question 3 of the present study relating to the students' attitudes towards applying self-assessment during revision, a post-study feedback form was administered to the experimental group students (see Appendix 8). This was included to obtain a true picture of the students' attitudes towards self-assessment. The experimental group applied self-assessment to their writing and the control group did not. Hence, only the former completed the post-study feedback form. I was unable to pilot the feedback form for the reasons mentioned in Section 3.2.

The post-study feedback form included three items related to the students' attitudes towards self-assessment in general. As the form was to be completed in the classroom, I designed it to be as short as possible to enable students to complete it within a lesson. I also translated each question in Arabic. The first item refers to the students' own opinions of the effect of self-assessment on their writing. The second item is intended to elicit responses regarding the difficulty of applying what's written in the self-assessment sheet. The third item invites the participants' to share their opinions about the different sections included in the self-assessment sheet by ranking the sections in terms of how easily that could implement the revision suggested. Moreover, to overcome the problem of the 'halo effect', students were requested to fill in the feedback form anonymously in class. It is expected that by keeping their answers anonymous, the students would be more likely to truthfully express their opinions without fear or embarrassment inhibiting their responses. Furthermore, they were

informed that it was important to provide answers to the items of the questionnaire reflecting their own experience with self-assessment and what they personally thought about it.

3.6.4 Questionnaire

Following on from the main study, as the data was being analysed, it became apparent that many of the conclusions being drawn from the results rested on how writing was taught in Libya. However, as explained in 3.2, it was impossible to gather this data following the study. My only option was to design a questionnaire and to use it on Libyan students in the UK. The next few sections detail the design of the questionnaire.

3.6.4.1 The design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix 7) was designed to gain information about how Libyan students are taught to write in Arabic and English. The questionnaire has both close and open-ended items. The close-ended questions are easily coded and tabulated quantitatively leaving no room for rater subjectivity; thus their analysis is less time consuming (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). In addition, Brown (2001) highlighted that close ended-questions are marked by providing uniformity across questions with reference to the types and specificity of the obtained data. He also contends that they are easier to be answered and less likely to be skipped by respondents, and that they are relatively objective. The format of the questionnaire was in the form of a list of multiple choice questions, combined with rating scales evaluating perceived levels of difficulty and frequency. On the other hand, the open-ended questions are worded with the purpose of yielding qualitative data through the text responses written in the respondents' own words (Jackson & Trochim, 2002).

The questionnaire comprised of four main sections. The first three sections were made up of close-ended questions and the last section was made up of open-ended questions. The participants were asked to write their own opinions or experiences of studying writing in Arabic and English. The questionnaire consisted of nineteen questions. The participants were asked to tick a box that corresponded with the most appropriate answer from a list of options presented in a multi-choice format. They were also asked to make an evaluative judgement of pre-provided statements by completing the rating scales. Two response scales to the close-ended questionnaire were used: a scale of frequency and a scale of difficulty. The frequency scale was designed to show how frequent the items in section 3 occurred i.e. assessing writing. The scale of frequency was designed in the form of a 5 point Likert scale. Each of

the five response options was assigned a number from 1 to 5 for scoring purposes. The response options and their assigned numbers are as follows: always (5), often (4), sometimes (3), rarely (2) and never (1). The difficulty scale was designed to accurately reflect the difficulty level that the majority of Libyan students would encounter in areas related to the various essay writing skills. These are namely general difficulties and difficulties associated with revising. The response options and their assigned numbers are as follows: very difficult (5), difficult (4), neither difficult nor easy (3), easy (2) and very easy (1).

All the sections of the questionnaire were arranged from simple to complex to motivate participants to answer the questions. Great care was taken in wording the questionnaire in order to avoid ambiguity and leading questions (Gillham 2000; Dörnyei, 2003). The following table presents the format of the questions and the purpose of each section.

Section	Focus	Purpose
1	Background information	To gain information about participants' experiences of studying Arabic and English writing in Libya.
2	Teaching writing	To gain information about techniques and methods which participants were exposed to when learning Arabic and English writing in a Libyan context.
3	Assessment of writing in Libyan classrooms	To gain information on how writing in both languages is examined and assessed.
4	Asking students to write down any comments about learning writing (e.g. differences between writing in Arabic and English)	To gain any other comments that might be helpful in understating the teaching of writing in Libya.

Table 3.3 The format of questions in the questionnaire and the purpose of each section

The choice of the questions was also based partly on the supposition that these questions could possibly have the potential of obtaining opinions from Libyans in the UK who had studied writing in English in Libya. The data of this questionnaire was used to provide an understanding of the findings of the current study.

The type of questions employed in this research was similar to that employed in three other studies exploring teaching writing in three different EFL contexts. These were conducted by El-Aswad (2002), Diab (2008) and Ahmed (2010) in Libya, Lebanon and Egypt. The questions contained in the questionnaire of these studies were not the same as those used in my study since they were conducted in different writing contexts (except El-Aswad's study) and purposes. However, the main aim of these questions was the same; namely to explore

how English and Arabic writing are taught. The piloting of the questionnaires will be presented in the following section 3.6.4.2.

3.6.4.2 Piloting the questionnaire

In order to ensure the research instrument's simplicity and efficacy and to avoid ambiguity, (Bell, 1987; Fogelman, 2002), the questionnaire was piloted on 9 Libyan volunteers who live and study in the UK. I met with the participants separately in different cities in the UK. The questionnaire was given to the participants to complete, which took about 8-9 minutes. After the participants were done with the questionnaire, I asked them in Arabic to read all the questions again and discussed each question with them. I asked them what they thought about the questionnaire and if they found any difficulty in answering any of the questions. Our discussion was recorded with an audio recorder (find CD attached).

From the discussion with participants, they all informed me that the number of the questions in the questionnaire was appropriate. 6 out of 9 said that all the questions were clear and easy to answer. However, the other three raised some questions about different items in the questionnaire. One participant asked about what writing in Arabic meant in Q1. Therefore, I added the word 'composition' and its equivalent in Arabic 'Innshaa' to clarify this point as the student was confused between writing as a composition and learning how to write in Arabic when starting school.

In addition, two participants were not sure when they answered question 12 about changes in mechanics and grammar as changes in mechanics were in the same column with grammar. They said they only make changes to spelling and punctuation. I therefore split the columns and each item was put in a separate column. Moreover, one of these two participants did not understand changes in content so I added between brackets, a short explanation for each item. Another participant did not understand 'theoretical knowledge' in question 14. To make this clear for other participants in the main study, I added the phrase, "(teachers gave lectures about writing)".

An interesting point was mentioned by one of the participants when question 15 was answered. Question 15 sought to establish if the participant had to write on a certain topic in an exam that had been discussed or dealt with previously in the class. The participant's point was that they do not write on a topic which they had written about before, but that their

teacher usually gives them a list of topics, from which one of these topics would be in the exam. Given this information, I added another similar question (Q16) using a scale of frequency to see if there are other participants might have had a similar experience of being given a list of topics before an exam. I also added an item in question 19 [By ignoring everything and only giving the final mark] after three students mentioned that marks were often given without explanation. Although there was an option [other] where students could write their own answers, I preferred to include it in my options to give participants more choices from the table and to respond to their comments in the pilot.

After making all these changes, I met with another six Libyans who were living in the UK to whom I gave the revised version of the questionnaire to complete. The participants took about 8-10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. After they finished, we discussed the questions in Arabic with four participants and in English with the other two. Our discussion was also recorded. The discussion with the participants revealed that they could clearly understand all the questions in the questionnaire and that all the questions were clearly presented. This completed the piloting of the questionnaire. For the final version of the questionnaire is presented in Appendix 7.

In the previous sections, I have discussed the design of the different research instruments that were used in the study. The next few sections detail the data collection procedures.

3.7 Data collection and processing procedures

There were two sets of data collected in the current study. The first set included two writing assignments (see 3.6.1), self-assessment sheet and a post-study feedback form. The second set of data was a questionnaire completed by Libyans in the UK who had gone through the Libyan education system. In this section, the two sets of data collected to conduct this study are discussed.

3.7.1 First set of data

In order to collect the first set of data, there were several visits to the university. The visits were ordered chronologically and the events at each visit explained. Table 3.4 provides chronology of visits and the time between each visit. The table is followed by a discussion of these visits in more detail.

Visit	Time	Data Collection	Outcome
1	Dec.27.2010	Obtaining permission from the university	Permission to conduct study was obtained
2	Dec.30.2010	*Introducing myself to students *Consent form *Writing assignment (writing a short paragraph to establish students' language proficiency levels)	* Consent forms were signed and collected. * students' writing was collected
3	Jan.06.2011	A meeting with the participants' writing teacher. Deciding the topic	The study was explained to the teacher. The teacher made arrangements for me to meet all the students of all groups in one big lecture room the following day.
4	Jan.09.2011	Discussion about writing and revision.	Students' writing difficulties were discussed. I talked about the importance of revision in improving writing. Students were told that they will be given a topic to write about.
5	Jan.13.2011	*Dividing students into two groups (i.e. control & experimental). * Writing an essay of multi-paragraphs by students in both groups.	*Students were divided into two groups. *140 essays originally were collected (these essays were then cut down to 100 after 40 students from the control group didn't complete the study).
6	Jan.16.2011	*Introducing self-assessment *Students' training of how to use self-assessment. *Meeting the students in the control group.	*Self-assessment was introduced. What it means and its aims were discussed with students in the experimental group. *Full explanation of the self-assessment sheet in English and Arabic was provided. Students were given two essays written by previous students who were kept anonymous and these were used for training purposes. * Discussion of what to look for in revision was discussed.
7	Jan.18.2011	* Returning the photocopies of students' first drafts to students from both groups. *Distributing self-assessment sheet & Guidance sheet to experimental group.	* Each student from both groups received a photocopy of his/her first draft on this day. *Self-assessment sheet & guidance sheet were given out to every student in the experimental group.
8	Jan.25.2011	*Collecting revised drafts &	63 essays (revised drafts) & 63 self-

		self-assessment sheet from the students in the experimental group. * Collecting revised drafts from the students in the control group.	assessment sheets were collected from the experimental group. *26 essays (revised draft) were collected from the control group.
9	Jan.26.2011	*Collecting missing revised essays from students in both groups *Distribution of post-study feedback form to students in the experimental group. .	*7 revised essays from the experimental group were collected and 4 essays from the control group were collected. Making them in total: 70 revised draft from the experimental group & 30 revised drafts from the control group. *Students in the experimental group completed the post-study feedback form anonymously and I collected them on the same day.

Table 3.4 Chronology of visits

Visit (1) I focused on obtaining permission from the university to conduct the study. A form of study permission (see Appendix 1 b) had been signed by the head of the English Department at Zawya University to conduct the study.

Visit (2) The teacher had informed the students prior to my visit that there will be a PhD student collecting data and that the students were expected to do some writing. I introduced myself to the students and secured their permission through completion of a consent form (see Appendix 2) to participate in the study. During this visit, I also asked the students to write a paragraph about the effects of smoking on people's health (see Appendix 31 for exact instructions). This step was to establish their language proficiency levels and to see if they would be able to produce sufficient writing for analysis.

Once the students had finished this first task, I collected the papers. Despite the students' many mistakes in spelling, punctuation, linking words, organisation and the general low standard of content in the writing, they were able to produce sufficient writing for analysis. On reflection, this was also probably an ideal group to investigate. As Kieft et al., (2007) points out, focusing on revision strategies is likely to be most helpful for writers with an under-developed writing strategy. The analysis of the data collected is likely to demonstrate whether low level students would be able to improve their writing by revising with the help of the self-assessment sheet.

Visit (3) This visit involved meeting the writing teacher and arranging a meeting with the students to conduct the study. He said that the following day would be suitable as he had a lecture with the students of Group A at 9:00am and another lecture with group B at 11.00am. Here, a problem emerged, as I needed all the students together in order to conduct the study at the same time. The teacher solved this administrative problem by asking the head of the English department to arrange with the Linguistics teacher to swap the lectures and gather the two groups together in one large group (the same procedure was applied to the control group). This was in order to:

- Ensure that the students in the experimental group would not inform students in the control group of the topic which might affect the reliability of the results.
- Ensure that all the students receive the same instructions.

The language of instruction I used was mainly Arabic to insure that all students understand study aims and procedures. I also used English to explain certain terms. Yet, their teacher spoke only English as he comes from a non-Arabic speaking country.

Visit (4) involved the introduction of revision for both groups. This was done in two lectures on the same day. This visit marked the beginning of the study procedure. I visited the student participants (about 140 students originally) and introduced myself again. We then had a discussion about writing and revision, and the students were asked verbally if they revised their writing after implementing corrections highlighted by the teacher. All of them answered 'no'.

Next, I gave the students a talk on revision and the importance of revision in improving writing. Most confirmed that they had found writing to be the most difficult skill to learn. This was also the view of Eldokali (2014), who indicated that writing skills are the most difficult skills to learn in the English language for Libyan students majoring in English in Sirte University. He also said that if they were asked to revise, they would not know what aspects to revise other than spelling and some elements of grammar (see 4.2.2). To avoid any embarrassment to their teacher, I refrained from asking students questions regarding certain issues like approaches used in teaching writing and communication with a non Arabic-speaking teacher. I also avoided questions about their own levels of satisfaction with the way

that they have been taught writing and focused my discussion on what they do when they write.

Visit (5) At this visit, I assigned the students to control and experimental groups at random. Hence, the participants of the study formed two groups: one experimental (classes A & B) and the other control (classes C & D). The experimental group consisted of 70 students who carried out the study (i.e. they applied the self-assessment sheet to their writing) and the control group also consisted of 70 students (the number of the students dropped to 30 as 40 students did not complete the study), but they did not apply the self-assessment sheet to their writing.

After the student selection process and after the assignment of the control and experimental groups, the study was initiated with the pre-test. Both groups of students were requested to write an essay within 90 minutes. The writing was based on the following prompts: ‘Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town’ (see 3.6.1, second assignment, for topic choice & see Appendix 5 for writing instruction).

Visit (6) Visit 6 involved a demonstration session that also served to train students in the experimental group how to use the self-assessment sheet. This was carried out the day after the pre-test had been set (i.e. first draft of the essay) with the teacher and the researcher who explained to the students the procedure, objectives, and importance of the current study. This explanation was given in English and it concentrated on the importance of revision in writing, learning autonomy and the assessment criteria used in writing. I then translated the explanation into Arabic to make sure that all the students understood what this study was about. This demonstration was done through providing the learners with two anonymous essays (see Appendix 13) written by previous students of the course. The essays were chosen by the students’ teacher after he had permission from the head of the English department. The two essays were of two different proficiency levels, advanced and low, to serve as exemplars for comparison and for students to see the difference between good and weak essays. In addition to a copy of the two samples, students were also provided with copies of the guidance sheet and the self-assessment sheet in order to apply it to the two essays in a practice session. This session took two and a half hours with two short breaks.

First, every student had a copy of the self-assessment sheet, a guidance sheet and the two essay samples (see Appendices, self-assessment sheet, Appendix 6; guidance sheet,

Appendix 12 and essay samples, Appendix 13). The guide sheet adopted from Min (2006) was given to the students to explain each item of the self-assessment from during the training session. Using the projector provided by the university, I explained every item in the self-assessment sheet in Arabic and English. I had also asked students to ask me if they needed any more clarification regarding any point. This took about 30 minutes. Then, students had a break for 5 minutes.

Students were then required to read the good essay first. I allocated 45 minutes to read the essay and complete the self-assessment sheet. All students worked individually although they were allowed to talk to their peers. After that, they had a 5 minute break. Then I allocated 30 minutes for the low proficiency essays. The students read the essays and tried to identify the mistakes. The teacher and I helped the students who needed help to address each item included in the sheet to ensure clarity and comprehension on their part. Then the students had a 10 minute break. After that, I revised all the essays (i.e. good and low proficiency essays) by using the projector and explained where the mistakes were and how they could be corrected. This was done by using a projector displaying that particular essay so all the students could see clearly, the nature of revisions made and check what they had completed on their self-assessment sheets. This stage took about 45 minutes. After this demonstration session with the experimental group, I met with the students of the control group. The same procedures were followed with the control group without using the self-assessment sheet and the guidance sheet. This took less time and was completed in about 30 minutes. During this time, students looked at the essays using the projector and they were asked by the lecturer if they were able to identify any mistakes and/or give any suggestions to improve the essays. After that, the students carried out the regular writing lesson with their teacher.

Visit (7) Visit 7 took place two days later. Students from both groups were then given a photocopy of their first draft. At 9:00am I met up with the students from the experimental group. A copy of the self-assessment sheet and guidance sheet were given to the experimental group in order to revise their first drafts at home (see Appendix 14 for instructions). The reasons for this were firstly to be time efficient, and secondly to separate students from their first drafts. According to Glynn, et al., (1982), this separation might have potential benefits for the 'non expert' writers or average writers, as they may produce better-quality final products when they first focus on freely generating ideas and later focus on structuring and restructuring. In the following lecture at 11:00am, the control group was also informed to re-

read their writing at home to look for any mistakes they might find and to make their writing better. This was the only instruction given to them (see Appendix 15 for instructions). Students in both groups were asked to submit their revised drafts. Students in the experimental group were asked to also submit their self-assessment sheets. At this stage, the writing teacher promised the students to give them a bonus of one mark in their final exam if they revised and brought back their writing.

Visit (8) which took place 4 days later, I collected the revised drafts from both groups (70 revised drafts from the experimental group and **only** 30 from the control group) and their corresponding self-assessment sheets (for the experimental group) which had been completed at home. The teacher promised to award a bonus of one mark to students, to provide motivation to revise and bring back their revised drafts. The initial plan was that the students in both groups should get feedback from their teacher after revision. Unfortunately, students were not able to attend the extra session to obtain feedback for the reasons discussed in 3.2.

Visit (9) I collected some missing revised essays from both groups (see Table 3.4). The visit also involved the distribution of the post-study feedback form to the experimental group, to identify their attitudes towards the technique used, i.e. self-assessment. The figure below presents a summary of the data collection process of students' writing.

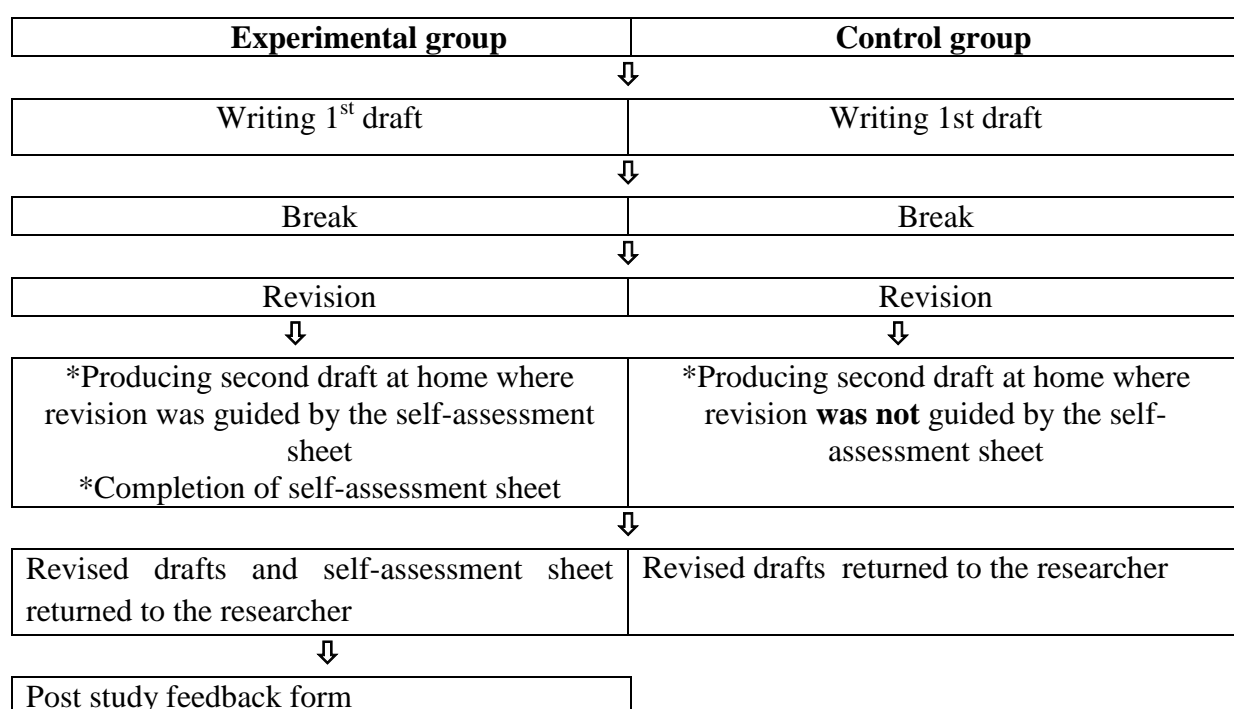


Figure 3.1 Summary of the data collection procedures of students' writing from both groups

3.7.2 Second set of data

3.7.2.1 Questionnaire

The first stage of data collection using the questionnaire about the teaching of writing and the experience of learning how to write in higher education in Libya started with telephone conversations with some friends who live and study in the UK. I informed them that I needed some participants to complete a questionnaire for my research study. They all agreed to participate. I also asked them if they knew any other Libyans in the UK who had studied in Libya in the last twenty years. It was my intention to pass on the questionnaire to them. As mentioned in section 3.6.4.2 the questionnaire was piloted twice and improved before the actual data collection.

I sent the questionnaire to 11 participants whom I already knew. These participants gave me the contact details of other potential participants. I personally contacted each one individually either by phone or email. At the end, a questionnaire (see Appendix 7), an information sheet informing the participants about the aims of the study (see Appendix 3) and the confidentiality and privacy of their data and a consent form (see Appendix 4) were given to 32 Libyans in the UK. All of them had graduated from different universities in Libya. All participants were asked whether they would prefer a hard copy of the questionnaire in case someone did not have access to a printer or the internet. Only six participants were given hard copies of the questionnaire while the rest had an electronic copy which was sent by email.

I received 32 completed questionnaires with consent forms (see Appendix 20 for a sample of the completed questionnaires. All questionnaires can be provided if necessary). All the students answered all the questions in the three sections of the questionnaire. However, section 4 of the questionnaire where participants were required to write down any comments about their writing, was only completed by 12 of the participants.

Having gathered all the data needed for this study (Appendix 9 & 10), I began the process of analysing the collected data. Data analysis procedures are discussed in detail in the following section.

3.8 Data analysis

The analysis of data is made up of three distinct stages, as defined by Miles and Huberman (1994). These stages consist of data reduction, data display and the drawing of conclusions or verification. The first stage which is effectively data reduction, results in the streamlining of the data obtained by utilising methods such as summarising, coding or abstracting. The second stage or data display stage, illustrates the resultant information in an explanatory format such as charts, matrices or networks. The final stage, the conclusion, involves drawing meaning from the displayed data in order to answer the questions posed by the thesis. As stated by Holliday (2002), through the synthesis of data and associated commentary and argument, a description of what has been discovered may be achieved.

The data analysis segment of any body of work is complex, and particularly so for qualitative research on topics of education. Once the data analysis is complete, it can potentially reveal very insightful information. It is the method by which the research connects to the main ideas and concepts of the work as a whole. In this study, data collection was undertaken utilising four research tools. These were students' writing, the self-assessment sheet, post-study feedback form and questionnaire. The data analysis was not undertaken in a linear format and there was some 'back and forth movement between the steps' (Lodico et al., 2006, p.302).

Data analysis was both a daunting and demanding process for two reasons. Firstly, there were more than 200 pages of handwritten text. Some handwritten essays were not very clear, particularly in the original draft form which were written in class. There were many scribbles and writing in the margins (see Appendix 26 for an example). Having faced these difficulties, I decided to make this data electronically available for two reasons; firstly, for the purposes of future reference; secondly, for the sake of easy access so that I would be able to read the essays easily and make notes during the course of initial analysis. As the iterative nature of the analysis process seemed endless, I had to go back to the data periodically in order to try and ensure consistency with the analysis.

I have presented the data analysis in accordance with the research questions posed by the present study, thereby combining elements of quantitative data analysis with qualitative data. Quantitative data analysis provides tangible evidence of changes in students' writing that take place once the self-assessment sheet has been implemented. Qualitative data analysis facilitates a more detailed dialogue on the effect of the self-assessment sheet on the quality of

students' writing. I started with the writing of 10 students from the experimental group to assist me in developing codes and categories for the whole dataset.

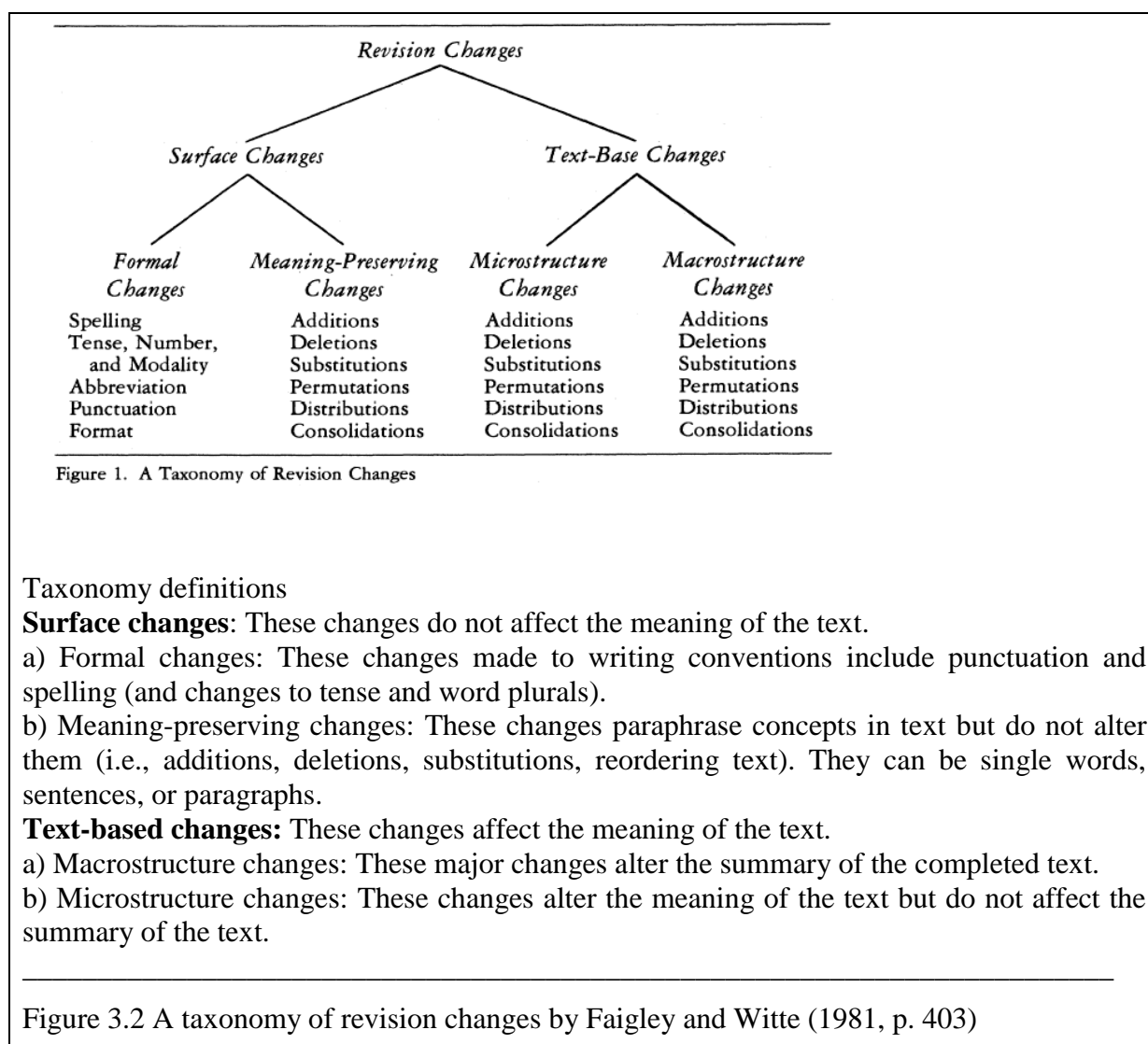
As the present study is concerned with effects of the self-assessment process on students' revised writing, the following section reviews some of the methods used to analyse revision of writing and discusses which one was used and why.

3.8.1 Methods used to analyse revision

There are many different ways in which revision is studied. A selection of some of these approaches is presented in Table 3.4 below. When considering the many aspects of a composition, revision is often suggested to be the simplest study tool as it offers a written record of alterations. In practice, the study of revision is complex. Past studies in this field have attempted to understand this complexity in a twofold way; by exploring the effects of revision on a composition and then attempting to understand the cause of revision. For a long time, the act of revision itself was not considered complex, rather it was seen to be simply a copy-editing process or a tidying up activity with the aim to remove surface errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and dictation (Faigley & Witte, 1981). There are two models which dominate research on revision. These are Faigley and Witte (1981) taxonomy of revision (Figure 3.2) and Bridwell's (1980) model of revision (Figure 3.3). Research on revision has not strayed far from these models in the last 30 years, as both these models offer a comprehensive approach to understanding revision. The following discussion presents both models and offers a survey of research using these methods. I then proceed to explain how I have adapted these models for the current study.

One of the most common methods used to analyse revision is Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy in 'Analysing Revision', where they distinguish between two types of revision: those that alter the meaning of the text and those that do not. This can, in itself be seen as problematic, as in many cases these revisions can take the same form; therefore the above distinction is made on those changes that affect the meaning and those that leave the meaning as it was. The arrangement is based on 'whether new information is brought to the text or whether old information is removed in such a way that it cannot be recovered through drawing inferences'. Alterations that affect surface structure without adding new or deleting old information are referred to as 'surface changes' and alterations that affect the information

present in the text by either adding or deleting ideas are referred to as ‘meaning changes’ (for more information about this taxonomy, see Appendix 18).



Bridwell (1980) analysed students’ writing with pen and paper, and produced a scheme built on the linguistic levels on which the students’ revisions operate. Bridwell identified seven linguistic levels and specified the operations that may happen during revision on each level as follows:

- Surface level (e.g. spelling, punctuation)
- Lexical level (e.g. single words, addition, deletion)
- Phrase level
- Clause level

- Sentence level
- Multi sentence level
- Text level (e.g. change in function category of essay)

Figure 3.3 linguistic levels of revision adopted from Bridwell (1980; pp. 203-204)

These two approaches have been extensively used in the field as shown in the following table.

Researcher(s)	Title	Method of analysis
Lam (2013)	The relationship between assessment types and text revision	Faigley & Witte's (1981) taxonomy was adopted.
Butler & Britt (2011)	Investigating Instruction for Improving revision of argumentative essays	Comparison of first draft with revision using coding scheme used by Bridwell (1980). Two raters scoring each pair of essays. Coded qualitatively.
Dix (2006)	I'll do it my way: Three writers and their revisions practices	Adapted version of Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy to analyse revision
Min (2006)	The effects of trained peer review on EFL students' revision types and writing quality	'Multiple-trait' approach for assessing writing quality. Adopted Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy for revision types.
John (2005)	The writing process and writer identity: Investigating the influence of revision on linguistic & textual features of writer identity in dissertations.	Quantitative & qualitative analysis approaches adopted. Manual coding of linguistic and textual features. Adopted Bridwell's coding scheme (1980) and Sommer's coding system (1980).
Yagelski (1995)	The role of classroom context in the revision strategies of student writers	An adapted scheme from Bridwell (1980) and Faigley and Witte (1981).
Beason (1993)	Feedback and revision in writing across the curriculum classes	Adapted from Faigley and Witte (1981) for revision analysis.
Sommers (1980)	Revision strategies of student writers and experienced of adult writers	Counting and categorising changes identifying 4 revision operations. Coding system developed identifying frequency of revision by level and operation.

Table 3.5 Review of the methods used to analyse revision in a selection of different studies

As illustrated by the above table, several previous studies on the subject of revision have adopted Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy to categorise the revisions made by participants of the study. Due to the success of this tried and tested method to categorise revision and its clear distinction between the two types of revision (surface and meaning

changes), I have elected to base my own model on this scheme. However, as this model categorises the number of revision types only, and does not take into consideration quality of revision, some modification is required. The limitations of the Faigley and Witte coding scheme are identified by Ferris (2003) as failing to ‘put different numbers of revision types into perspective’ and ‘the fact that it does not address the possible effects of revision types on revision quality’. The integration of Bridwell’s (1980) revision scheme with Faigley and Witte creates a method of categorisation and analysis that takes into account quality of changes as well as number and type of revisions. This adoption was also used by Yagelski (1995) in his study.

In addition to the two models which were combined and adapted for my study (detailed in the next section), I have used Sommers' (1980) terms referring to revisions. In her study, she referred to four revision operations ‘deletion, substitution, addition and reordering’ (Sommers, 1980, p.380).

3.8.2 Coding scheme for revision for the present study

Having reviewed and considered some of the models used to analyse revision, a combined method was chosen to analyse the revisions made by students in this study. Faigley and Witte’s (1981) taxonomy and Bridwell’s (1980) scheme for analysing revision were both used to explain the types of revisions taking place – i.e. what type of revision and at which linguistic level. I have then used Sommers’ terminology in my discussion of the revisions to understand the writer’s action during revision (deletion, substitution, addition and reordering).

To summarise, the model used for the present study (see Table 3.6) classifies revisions according to two main categories: surface revisions and meaning revisions. The measures in this study were: (1) the number of students who revised; (2) the linguistic level of revision (e.g. word, phrase, sentence, paragraph level) using Bridwell’s (1980) coding scheme; and (3) the type of revision (i.e. surface and meaning) using Faigley & Witte’s (1981) taxonomy and Sommers (1980) revision operations.

The revised drafts were coded for revisions in accordance with a system of coding modified from Bridwell (1980) and Faigley and Witte (1981). This combined scheme was created to serve a number of purposes. Firstly, to ensure that the findings could be compared with those

of other studies in the same field. Secondly, the syntactic elements of the writing, for example words or paragraphs, may be classified in such a way, that the effects of revision on text meaning are clearly illustrated.

Table 3.6 presents the occurrence of each type of revision when analysing each element, i.e. content, organisation and language. It summarises how the model was used to present the data analysis in the following chapter. The revisions that students made were divided into two types as shown below:

Type of revision Essay Elements	Surface	Meaning
Content	<p>*Concerned with the quality and internal content of introduction, body and conclusion.</p> <p>*Additions or deletions at word, phrase or sentence levels that do not alter the meaning of the writing but improve the quality of writing.</p>	<p>*Concerned with the quality and internal content of introduction, body and conclusion.</p> <p>*Additions or deletions at word, phrase, sentence or paragraph levels that alter the meaning by adding or removing ideas in a way that improves the quality of writing.</p>
Organisation	<p>*Revising the physical structure of the essay.</p> <p>*Explaining one idea in each paragraph.</p> <p>*Substitutions, deletions or additions of transitional devices which do not affect text cohesion.</p>	<p>*Substitutions, deletions or additions of transitional devices which improve text cohesion.</p>
Language	<p>*Correcting mistakes in grammar and mechanics.</p>	<p>Not applicable, as all changes occurring in this category are considered surface level changes.</p>

Table 3.6 Summary of types of revision changes of content, organisation and language

Some of the revisions which may appear to be surface-like changes were in fact, revisions which affected meaning. This occurred typically at word level. To provide an illustration, some students added one word in their introduction which affected the body paragraph. For example, when the students were asked to write about the ‘differences between living in a big city and a small town’, one of the students added the word ‘education’ to her introduction.

This addition of a single word affected the body of her essay where she added a corresponding paragraph discussing 'education'.

3.8.3 Analysis of writing assignments

The first step in the process of data analysis of students' writing is primarily concerned with coding. At the start of this process, the large amount of data gathered from the students' writing needed to be rationalised. In order to do this, a grading system was used to grade all the essays (both drafts and final versions). The essays of all the students (experimental and control) were graded using an analytical mark scheme called the ESL Composition by Jacob et.al, 1981, a popular and widely used mark scheme.

In order to obtain some reliability and consistency around the grading, I contacted two native English speakers and one non-native English speaker who had experience in teaching EFL for international students in the UK to participate in the grading of all the essays. One of the raters had used the scheme previously as she had taught EFL students in the University of Birmingham. The other two raters had not used this scheme at all, but they had had experience in correcting EFL/ ESL students' essays at the University of Manchester and at the University of Birmingham (see Appendix 30 for more details). They had taught English for Academic purposes writing. It should be noted that although they were experienced raters, they may not have been familiar with marking the kind of data used in this study. Therefore, the raters were trained to use the rating scheme by Jacobs et al. (1981). The three raters and I met twice before the actual rating took place. I had chosen two essays randomly from each group (i.e. control and experimental) to be used in the training of the three raters. After the training session the raters scored the essays independently. Although the three raters did not assign the same score, the agreement between the raters reached 96% in the first three essays. Then, the raters rated the remaining essays. Two weeks later, after the scoring was completed, inter-rater reliability was checked. Results showed that correlation coefficient (r) ranged between 0.58 and 0.98 which means there is a positive correlation between raters 1 & 2 but not with rater 3 (see Appendix 24). This was surprising, given that this was not the case for rater 3 when he scored the first three essays in the calibration and training session. Despite finding that rater 3 was not scoring reliably across all essays with the other two raters, I kept rater 3 in because his scoring did not affect the scores of those students identified as being in the top ten or the bottom ten of the groups. However, I eliminated rater 3 from the coding of revisions in the data to ensure greater consistency here.

To arrive at a final grade, I calculated the average of the score of each essay from the three raters. This was done by adding the three scores of each essay and then dividing the sum by 3. The following is an example of how the calculation was done:

Rater 1 scored 72, Rater 2 scored 74 and Rater 3 scored 70.

Data set:

72, 75, 70

Average

Count: 3

Sum: 217

Average: $217 / 3 = 72.3333333$

The scores suggested that four of the students in the experimental group displayed an implausible improvement to their scores (see Appendix 28). Given that they had revised these essays outside the classroom setting, I was unable to determine if the students had received any help with their revision. I therefore decided to remove these essays from the set. I then went on to rank all the essays by group (control and experimental) and I extracted the top ten and bottom ten from each of these groups. Analysing the top ten and the bottom ten would give me an idea of the ways in which different writers within what would appear to be the same proficiency group (i.e. they are all of the same level based on the scores they achieved during a university enrolment test (see 3.6.1) revise their texts and to see if any differences emerge from such an analysis. These 40 essays are the focus of the analysis of revisions in the data analysis chapter, Chapter 4.

3.8.4 Developing codes for the revision analysis scheme

I began with coding the data for 3 students. These 3 students were chosen at random from the experimental group, constituting 6 essays including both original and revised drafts. The first step towards the analysis was achieved by using different colours to highlight the three aspects that were mentioned in the self-assessment sheet (i.e. content, organisation and language). This made it possible to visually distinguish between these aspects and I made notes of ideas and reflections that came to mind as I analysed the data. This process included guesses, questions raised by the data, and links to literature that were useful in interpreting the data and relating them to other substantive areas.

Throughout this process of analysis, I focused on certain types of revisions that the students made to their writing in relation to content, organisation and language. Initially, tables were developed (see Appendix 16) to code changes and revisions that occurred post implementation after the student had referred to the self-assessment sheet. The data collected from the 3 students from each group were first coded under wide headings before being refined into more detailed sub-headings. These sub-headings referred to the different types of changes and revisions that occurred after the students had consulted the self-assessment sheet. All the data that made up this study is available electronically. However, I chose to code this data manually by counting the mistakes as electronic coding has limitations especially in terms of revision of content. John (2005, p.69) states that '[s]tudying revision requires a fair amount of analysis of the context in which revision takes place and this is best done manually'. I felt that as the present study is concerned primarily with the type of revision and changes made to the quality of revision, as opposed to the appearance of revision or evaluation of revision, a manual approach would be the most beneficial way of analysing the data.

Once the codes were identified, (see Appendix 16) a final revision analysis scheme was created to illustrate the data analysis of the quality and types of revisions made by students. This scheme was the one selected to be used in the present study. On reaching the final stage of analysis, I had obtained clear and insightful understanding of the results through the process of data write up. The final interpretation (Cohen et al., 2007, p.480) can be viewed as the most important phase, as it allows the research to transcend from a descriptive work to one of inference.

After that, to ensure reliability, the two raters and I had calibrated the coding system to check the essays and students' revision. The two independent raters and the researcher attended a calibration session during which they assessed three randomly chosen pairs of draft and revision for both first and revised essays. If there was a difference in opinion, the result would be the one shared by two of the three raters. Then, the three would exchange opinions on how they rated the first and revised drafts by the criteria they reached to further calibrate their assessment standards. After the "norming" session, the three proceeded to rate the essays independently. There were few cases where the raters had a different opinion on writing.

The process of coding was developed at this stage, however, it is important to stress that there is some overlap between the mistake categories and that precise categorisation was not always possible. For example, ‘*in city there a lot of schools and.....*’. The underlined mistake can be categorised as an omission (are) and/or fragment. Therefore, two independent raters (see Appendix 30 for more details about the raters) were contacted to reach an agreement on how to code the students’ mistakes and revisions. As presented by the students’ writing, many essays had several grammatical and lexical mistakes, as well as other issues in content and organisation. Important decisions were taken with the help of the two raters on coding some mistakes.

As observed from the students’ revised drafts, most students revised elements of grammar that were mentioned in the self-assessment sheet. Besides the grammatical mistakes made by the students in both groups, there were lexical mistakes such as wrong form, articles, pronouns which were not mentioned in the self-assessment sheet. Therefore, the first decision taken was regarding the lexical mistakes. Lexical mistakes were to be identified and not to be included in the analysis. Although there were many lexical mistakes in the first drafts of the students from both groups, only a few mistakes were corrected (e.g. using during instead of while, see Appendix 27 Essay 1, pp. 362-366).

The second decision taken was related to spelling. There were some repeated spelling mistakes of the same word in the same draft. We had to decide if we were to count it as one spelling mistake or two spelling mistakes. First, we counted it as a one spelling mistake. We then found that some students wrote the same word in the same draft once with the correct spelling and on another occasion with the wrong spelling. Consequently, the coding changed and the spelling mistake was counted twice for the same word. For example, in Essay 1 (Appendix 27, p. 362) the word ‘town’ is written ‘twon’ (i.e. wrong spelling) 6 times and ‘town’ (i.e. correct spelling) twice on the same draft. The same case is in Essay 2 (Appendix 27, p.367). In addition, if we apply the same case on another grammatical element such as ‘subject verb agreement’ (i.e. counting the same mistake only once) it would be very difficult to count mistakes of subject verb agreement. For example, ‘*there is a lot of trees*’, ‘*there is a lot of job opportunity*’, the two sentences have identical mistakes and counted twice because the student wrote the correct form later on the same draft ‘*there are not many shops*’ (see Appendix 27, Essay 5, p.381). Therefore, identical mistakes made by the same student were not counted as one mistake. This is because the study is not an attempt to explore which

mistakes or errors were common across the students. It is more of an attempt to help students to identify their own mistakes and learn how to correct them. In addition, as there were no interviews with the students due to the reasons explained in 3.2, in this case it was very difficult to determine whether the mistake was made accidentally or if the student had little knowledge about grammatical rules of subject verb agreement.

It was also difficult to count errors of omission. For example, some students omitted a word, punctuation, article or a preposition. In this case the raters and I agreed to code omission according to what had been omitted. For example, '*I live in <a> big city*'. Here, the student in this example omitted an article <a>. Instead of coding it as an omission error, we agreed to code it as a mistake in using articles which comes under 'other grammatical mistakes' in the coding sheet (see Appendix 16).

3.8.5 A comparison of first and revised drafts

The essays (original and revised) obtained from students in both groups i.e. experimental and control, were analysed and compared in respect of three aspects of essay writing, which are the main focus of this study. These are content, organisation and language (grammar and mechanics). Before embarking on the analysis of the students' revision, I first wish to present the methods that have been reviewed for analysing revision.

To analyse the extent to which students made use of the self-assessment process in their revisions, the following steps were followed:

- First drafts were examined by the two raters and the researcher for any mistakes and/or revisions.
- Self-assessment sheets were examined to determine the extent to which students responded to the different components of their paragraphs and essays.
- All mistakes which were corrected or uncorrected were counted.
- All revisions made by students in their second drafts were identified to see how they revised according to the self-assessment sheet. The percentage of the students who revised their texts was then counted.
- Using the method adopted from Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy of revision and Bridwell's (1980) linguistic level scheme discussed in 3.8.1, each revision to the first draft was categorised as either a surface revision or a meaning revision.

- The revisions which could not be cross-linked to the self-assessment items were considered to be the student's self-initiated revisions.

The analysis of how students made use of self-assessment to revise their drafts was also carried out by linking revisions made to other factors such as the training session and the guidance sheet.

3.8.6 Criteria used to judge the quality of revisions in students' revised drafts:

Knowing full well that it was difficult to analyse writing quantitatively, certain criteria were taken into consideration to measure the quality of the changes made during revision.

To understand the revisions made by students of both groups (guided by the self-assessment sheet for the experimental group), I designed some tables to record changes before and after revision (see Appendix 16). Each item, in every section of the self-assessment sheet (e.g. content section, introduction item) has corresponding tables that display the revisions that the students made to their writing, if any.

The following sections discuss the criteria that were taken into consideration when analysing and judging 'good' and 'low proficiency' writing. I will discuss the criteria that helped me analyse the data in each section.

3.8.6.1 Content section:

In this section, students were asked to consider the content of their introductions, body paragraphs and conclusions. Students of both groups were asked to write an essay consisting of at least three paragraphs: an introductory paragraph (called 'introduction' in the current study), a body paragraph(s) and a concluding paragraph (termed 'conclusion' in the current study).

A- First item: My introduction offers a clear indication of the topic and purpose

I reviewed some writing guides such as Xudong (2003), Taylor & Turner (2004), Spalding (2005), Bailey (2006), Schulzrinne (2008), Burns & Sinfield (2008), Bailey (2011), Fuggle (2011), and Bailey (2015) in order to investigate which characteristics could be present in an introduction. The introduction to any piece of writing is usually vital to the overall perception of the piece. The introduction has the potential to captivate the reader's attention and can ultimately determine whether or not they continue to read. It may also concurrently inform the reader of the subject matter and sets the tone. Introductions can be used to get the reader's

attention, communicate background information and finally introduce the central idea and aim of the essay.

Getting attention

Creating an interesting opening sentence that stimulates the curiosity of the reader can be achieved in a number of ways. An anecdote or an interesting story may be used. Alternatively, the writer could relate a story of personal experience in connection to the subject matter. The writer could pose a question to the reader or provide a personal observation. Including facts or statistics is also a useful way to attract the reader to the piece, particularly if these are surprising or unusual. The writer can take a different route by including a quotation or by defining a relevant term for the reader. These methods constitute some of the more usual ways of introducing an essay, but are in no way definitive (Fuggle, 2011; Bailey, 2105).

- Background information

When the text has the reader's attention, it is important to include some background information on the topic. This will allow the reader to become familiar with the topic at hand and provide a framework for further understanding. The information should optimally, enable a reader with no previous knowledge, to form some understanding about the topic (Bailey, 2006; Fuggle, 2011).

- The central idea

The central idea is referred to as the 'thesis or purpose statement' in the current study. It should follow on from the inclusion of background information to inform the reader about the focus of the essay. It is essential to the introduction and can take one of two forms: a direct thesis statement or an indirect thesis statement.

A direct statement is usually a very specific outline of the essay illustrating the structure of each section. It may also state what each section of the writing will cover and briefly discuss the conclusion.

An indirect statement is usually less specifically descriptive; instead it lays out the aspects that will be covered in more general terms. There will be no outline of structure or description of contents.

Both these ways of introducing the thesis statement may fulfil the same function. Having a direct or indirect statement in the introduction may enable the reader to clearly understand the focus of the piece and be introduced to the arguments or ideas that will be included. It could also serve to introduce the writer's point of view in relation to the topic at hand. Often, a thesis statement will be revised once the essay is completed to ensure that it corresponds with the main body.

In general, the main criteria used to judge the quality of students' introductions suggest that an introduction ought to consist of the following elements to be judged as a clear introduction:

- Three or more sentences
- Background information
- States the purpose statement directly or indirectly

The following Table 3.7 summarises the criteria which have been chosen to help evaluate whether the introduction is clear or unclear in the students' writing.

Types of introduction	Criteria / description
Clear introduction	Refers to an introduction which includes background information and a specific direct or indirect thesis statement.
Unclear introduction	Refers to: * Introduction of one or two introductory sentences with repetition of the same words of the title. * Misleading

Table 3.7 Types of introduction in students' writing

Types of revision to the introduction:

The changes made after revising the introduction were classified as either surface or meaning changes as discussed below.

- a- Surface revision:** For surface revisions to the introduction I will be looking at additions, deletions, or substitutions of words, phrases and sentences that did not alter the meaning of the writing (Example 3.1 is an example of surface revision to introduction).

Note: **The bold underlined** writing in examples 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 refers to revision changes made by students.

Example 3.1 Surface revision of introduction

Example of surface revision of introduction	
First draft	Revised draft
There are a lot of differences between living in a big city or small town, and also there are advantages and disadvantages for living in each place. Include the way of living, the surrounding, habits, the education and so on. This essay will include the differences between them	There are a lot of differences between living in a big city or small town, and also there are advantages and disadvantages for living in each place. Include the way of living, the surrounding environment , habits, the education and so on. This essay will include the differences between them.

b- Meaning revision: Revision at phrase, sentence and paragraph level which affects the meaning by either adding or deleting information. This, in some cases, affects the introduction type. For example, an unclear introduction becomes a clear introduction after utilising the self-assessment process in revision. The following example 3.2 is an example of a meaning revision to the introduction.

Example 3.2 Meaning revision in the introduction from top ten experimental group

Example of meaning revision in the introduction	
First draft	Revised draft
(1) There are many differences between living in a city and living in a town. In the next paragraph I will explain the differences.	There are many differences between living in a big city and living in a town. Living in both places differs in many aspects. What I might think is positive can be negative for someone else. However, the main aspects that I will explain in the next paragraph are fresh air, social life and availability of schools and hospitals.

B- Second item: The main ideas in my writing are supported by specific examples, reasons or facts.

This item refers to the body paragraph(s). Students were asked to write at least three paragraphs, the second constituting of what we call a body paragraph. The main body paragraph is often viewed as the most important part of a piece of writing as it is the vehicle for the main point to be delivered to the reader. According to some of the writing guides reviewed such as Kiefer (1983), Evans (2011) and many others, the main body paragraph usually contains the information that explains the main point of the writing to the reader through the inclusion of examples or supporting points. It ought to be easy to read by being well organised. In order for it to be considered a 'good' main body paragraph, the writing

usually refers to the purpose statement made in the introduction (Evans, 2011). The main body paragraph may also deliver the goal stated in the thesis statement. The first sentence in the body paragraph is usually an introduction to the point that is about to be made. This could be followed by the presentation of the main idea in the next sentence. The subsequent sentences are usually explanatory in nature, containing details, specifics and information, such as facts, examples, quotes and various arguments that support the main idea. The number of these sentences varies from piece to piece. The final sentence in a paragraph could be a transition sentence that forms some sort of conclusion to the points made, summarising the main idea and moving the reader on to the next paragraph and the next idea.

The above elements were taken into consideration when measuring the quality of the body paragraph and whether or not the main point of the writing is presented through the use of facts, examples, or reasons. In order to trace the revisions that the students made to their body paragraph(s), I designed some tables to locate these changes after revision. After revision, these tables were used to investigate whether students added or deleted any ideas or information related to the body paragraph. I also tried to determine if these additions or deletions affected the quality of the text. The following table 3.8 provides a summary of the different criteria used to evaluate the quality of the body paragraph.

Type	Criteria
1- One sentence body paragraph.	Refers to an opening paragraph made up of only one sentence
2- Body paragraph with underdeveloped ideas.	Refers to: *paragraph that lacks appropriate supporting details. *paragraph that does not adequately address the topic of the writing.
3- Developed body paragraph	Refers to the provision of appropriate and adequate details to support the thesis statement.

Table 3.8 Criteria used to judge quality and types of body paragraph

Having discussed different types of body paragraph found in the writing of the students, the next step is to establish whether after the use of the self-assessment form, students have made surface or meaning revisions to the body paragraph.

Types of revision to body paragraph:

The types of revision changes made after revising the body paragraph(s) will be determined as either surface or meaning revisions.

- a- Surface revision:** Regarding surface revisions in the body paragraph, I looked at additions, deletions, or substitutions of words, phrases and sentences that did not affect the meaning of the writing. The following example (3.3) illustrates a surface revision made to a body paragraph which did not affect the meaning of the essay.

Example 3.3 Surface revision to a body paragraph

Example of Surface revision to body paragraph	
First draft	Revised draft
The people of small towns is more connected together rather than in a big city because in a small town the people can visit and connect with each other and know everything about each their life but in a big city, the people will be concern with their jobs and works and it will be no time to visit or connect. At the same time the living in big city is more expensive and cost rather than in a small town. Moreover there are many good schools and very big hospitals with professional doctor in big city, and high education there for students rather than a small town, the small town has very limited schools and teachers and one hospital or not exist. And also a big city has some problems in traffic. This area always be very busy and traffic and it is very difficult to reach to your work early or on time and also it causes many accident to many people but in a small town the people but in a small town the people live in a very calm and peacefulness and it gives a sense of comfort and relaxation.	First, people in small towns are more connected together rather than in a big city. This is because in a small town the people can visit and connect with each other and know everything about each their life but in a big city, the people will be concern with their jobs and works and there will be no time to visit or connect. Secondly, at the same time, the living in big city is more expensive and cost rather than in a small town. Moreover, there are many good schools and very big hospitals with professional doctor in big city, and high education there for students rather than a small town, the small town has very limited schools and teachers and one hospital or not exist. And also a big city has some problems in traffic. This area is always very busy and traffic and it is very difficult to reach to your work early or on time. It also causes many accident to many people but in a small town the people live in a very calm and peacefulness and it gives a sense of comfort and relaxation.

- b- Meaning revision:** These are revisions at phrase and sentence level which affect meaning through the addition and/or deletion of information and ideas. Such meaning revisions will usually result in changing the body paragraph from undeveloped or underdeveloped to developed. There are not many examples for this type. The following example (3.4) illustrates a meaning revision to a body paragraph.

Example 3.4 Meaning revision to a body paragraph

Example of meaning revision to body paragraph	
First draft	Revised draft
First difference is social life every of us know that the relationship between the people in twon is very coherent more than the people in city, those in the city are concern with business and different issue about life style for that they don't matter about social relationship. Second difference is about the traffic, the big twon has many pollution that make traffic in streets. These cause dirty air and very bad temper for people how drive car. While in twon you will never find this kind of traffic because there are few people and big streets. So you will have very fresh air there. The last difference is about cost living. The living style in twon is very cheap than the living in city.	First difference is social life <u>every one</u> of us know that the relationship between the people in <u>town</u> is very coherent more than the people in city, those in the city are <u>concerned</u> with business and different issue about life style for that they don't matter about social relationship. Second difference is about the traffic, the big <u>town</u> has many pollution <u>problems</u> that make traffic in streets. These cause dirty air and very bad temper for people how drive car. While in <u>town</u> you will never find this kind of traffic because there are few people and big streets. So you will have very fresh air there. The last difference is about cost <u>of</u> living. The living style in <u>town</u> is very cheap than the living in city. <u>In my opinion the only good difference in city is the availability of good schools and hospitals. There are a lot of schools anhosiptals in city while in town you find only one or two schools. And hospitals in towns there is only one small and not very good hospital. So people has to go to cities for any illness.</u>

C- Third item: The conclusion summarises the main points in the writing

The conclusion of a piece of writing serves as a way to bring closure to the reader. It is often the part of a piece of writing that the reader remembers the most, as it summarises all the points made as well as sums up the final viewpoint of the writer.

A conclusion could be made up of a number of sentences that review the main points and summarise the piece of writing, followed by the reiteration of the thesis statement and how this thesis statement has been proved correct. It usually stresses the importance of the thesis statement and gives the essay a sense of completeness. The conclusion may be used to illustrate to the reader why they read the piece and why the information contained within the writing was meaningful. A strong conclusion usually does not simply repeat the points made earlier in the writing. It could show how the points fit together with supporting evidence and

information to make evident, a final point or point of view (Spalding, 2005; Bailey, 2006; Burns & Sinfield'2008; and Fuggle, 2011)

Although there is no set framework for a successful conclusion, certain elements are required. A topic sentence stated at the start of the conclusion may help direct the paragraph; the topic sentence could be used to summarise the piece of writing and can also be attention-grabbing, yet brief. This sentence is usually used to frame the paragraph, reminding the reader of the aim of the essay. The following sentences in the conclusion may briefly state the main points made in the essay and how they relate to the thesis statement. Finally, the conclusion usually ends with a closing sentence that could be in the form of an opinion, a recommendation, or a statement or indeed, raise further questions.

Students in this study were asked to revise the content of their conclusion, and to write a concluding paragraph, not a concluding sentence. Most students wrote a one-sentence conclusion for their writing. It is for this reason that I used tables to investigate whether or not the writing had a conclusion before and after revision. There were mainly 3 types of conclusion.

Criteria	Description
Type 1- No conclusion	Refers that writing that has no concluding paragraph.
Type 2- Unclear conclusion	Refers to: *Writing with a concluding paragraph that does lead the writing to a closure. *One short concluding sentence usually a repetition of the title.
Type 3- Clear conclusion Summary	Refers to one of the following: *Conclusion that summarises the main points of the writing. * Conclusion that states the writer's opinion or addresses the reader by giving recommendations. * Conclusion that has both summary and opinion.

Table 3.9 Types of conclusions in students' writing

I designed some tables identify the differences relating to the conclusion between the first draft and the second draft. The first table showed the presence and absence of the conclusion for each student. The conclusion in the analysis chapter is divided into three categories. The first and second are the same as stated in the above table while types three and four are referred to as a clear conclusion.

After using the self-assessment sheet, the revisions made to the conclusion were again checked to classify whether these revisions led to a surface or a meaning improvement to the conclusion.

Types of revision to the conclusion:

The types of the changes observed following revision of the conclusion will be determined as either surface or meaning changes (see analysing revision).

- a- Surface revision:** Surface revision refers to additions, deletions, or substitutions of words, phrases, or sentences that did not affect the meaning of the writing. The following example (3.5) shows such revision.

Example 3.5 Surface revision of conclusion

Example of surface revision of conclusion	
First draft	Revised draft
Looking at these differences, I think living in a small town is better, but some people think the city is better. It doesn't matter, well now we understand what differences we made, and one day I would like to go back to the peaceful small town.	<u>In conclusion, by</u> lookingat these differences, I think living in a small town is better, but some people think the city is better. It doesn't matter, well now we understand what differences we made, and one day I would like to go back to the <u>peaceful</u> small town <u>where I used to live.</u>

- b- Meaning revisions:** Changes of phrases, sentences and paragraph levels which affect the meaning by adding or deleting some information which change the type from no or unclear conclusion (i.e. types 1 and 2) to a clear conclusion (i.e. types 3 or 4 as stated in Table 3.8). The following example (3.6) illustrates what can be considered as a meaning revision to a conclusion

Example 3.6 Meaning revision to a conclusion

Example of meaning revision of conclusion	
First draft	Revised draft
As a conclusion, one have got to be really careful when diciding to live in a town or a	<u>In conclusion I believe that one should be very careful</u> when <u>deciding whether</u> to live

city and should take the advantages as well as the disadvantages in to consideration but personally, I prefer to live in a town more than to live in a city.	in a city or a town and should <u>consider all of the advantages and disadvantages before making a decision. I, personally, would prefer to live in a small town as I feel it is more important to have a healthy and quiet living environment with a good social life.</u>
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3.8.6.2 Organisation section:

This section was designed to help students check their paragraph division and cohesion to make their writing read well.

A- First item: My writing is organised into paragraphs

This item refers to the physical structure of the writing. Participants in the study were asked to produce an essay of at least three paragraphs. According to Bailey (2011) the essay structure ought to include an introductory paragraph, a body paragraph(s) and a concluding paragraph. Also, the students are usually taught in class to write a maximum of three paragraphs in their writing.

The analysis of the physical structure consisted of a simple count of paragraphs; this item was included in the self-assessment sheet to assist students in revising their essay structure, as some students wrote only one paragraph. Tables were designed to count how many paragraphs the students wrote before and after revision (see Appendix 16). These tables were used to see what type of revision had been applied to paragraph division. The tables were also used to determine whether paragraphs were joined together, if one-paragraph writing was divided into smaller units or a paragraph or more were added. Different physical structures of paragraphs were found in students' writing. When analysing, I considered the possibility that students may write a good essay without following this structure. Unfortunately, none were found.

Analysis of the organisation element of writing was based on two aspects. The first aspect is by defining the structure of the essay in the first and revised draft. The second one is by deciding the type of changes that occurred in the revised draft. The physical structure of the essays contained the following structures:

- Structure (1) writing that consists of three paragraphs or more
- Structure (2) writing that consists of one paragraph

- Structure (3) writing that consists of two paragraphs. This structure refers to the writing that consists of one of the following:
 - Structure (3) a: one combined paragraph that included introduction and body paragraphs together and a separate conclusion.
 - Structure (3) b: one separate introductory paragraph, a body and a concluding paragraph combined as one paragraph.

After deciding on the type of essay structure in the first draft, the revised drafts were checked to identify type of revisions that were made. Changes to essay's physical structure and number of students who did and did not revise organisation were noted. The following organisational changes were also recorded.

- Consolidation: Students who joined paragraphs together
- Distribution: Students who divided paragraphs into smaller units
- Addition: Students who added a paragraph

* No revision: Students who did not revise the essay structure

Most of the paragraph structure revisions were considered as surface revisions. These revisions helped students to organise their ideas.

B- Second item: Each paragraph contains one main idea

Ideally, each paragraph in any writing should contain one main idea, and all sentences making up the paragraph should relate to a single main point (Spalding, 2005; Maddox, 2009; Driscoll & Brizee, 2013). This point can be stated in what is known as the 'topic sentence', typically defined as the sentence that gives the main idea of the paragraph and usually occurs at the beginning or end of the paragraph. Hence, if the supporting sentences in each paragraph discuss one main point, this will help to judge whether the changes in the paragraph division in the previous section were effective.

The second item of the organisation section will encourage students to revise their writing by checking that each paragraph contains one main idea. For example, some students, after revision, wrote three paragraphs (see Appendix 21, type a): the introductory paragraph, where the main idea of the writing was introduced; the body paragraph(s), where the main topic was discussed; and the concluding paragraph, where the main points of the writing were summarised. Other students wrote four paragraphs: introductory paragraph, first body paragraph containing only an explanation of city life, a second body paragraph dealing with

life in a town, and a concluding paragraph. In general, students in Libya are taught to write this way. This was made evident in the questionnaire results of this study (see 4.2). However, by applying the process of self-assessment to their writing, I found that many students wrote more than one paragraph for the organisation of their ideas. The number of students, who made these types of revisions and the quality of these revisions, are presented in the analysis chapter (Chapter 4).

This item on whether each paragraph has a main idea was judged by looking at the topic sentence which expresses the main idea or what the paragraph is about. Revision in this instance was more effective for students who wrote four or more paragraphs. For example, some students wrote two body paragraphs. They explained the advantages and disadvantages of living in city in a one paragraph and the advantages and disadvantages of living in a town in a separate paragraph. The raters and I looked at the topic sentence of each paragraph and the supporting sentences to identify whether all the sentences making up the paragraph are related to a single main idea.

C- Third item: My paragraphs are cohesive through the use of transition words

This item was used mainly to help students employ transitional devices to make smooth transitions between paragraphs. It helped the students revise and check the cohesion of their writing. The effective use of transitions helps to convey information to the reader in a clear and concise way. A transition creates connections between sentences and paragraphs and can take the form of a single word, a phrase or even a full sentence. Their function is to tell the reader what to do with the information presented. They direct the reader as to how to put together the argument and how the ideas fit together. They provide the reader with important information about the relationship between different ideas in a single piece of writing, bringing together different components to create a cohesive whole, but transitions can be very confusing if used inaccurately (Burns & Sinfield, 2008; Fuggle, 2011 and Bailey, 2011).

As in the analysis of this element, I used tables (see Appendix 16) to see if there were any changes to the transitions used in the writing before and after revision. These tables were used when I noticed that some students did not include any transitions in their writing before revision. But after revision, some of these students added transitions to their writing. These tables were used to identify any revisions that were made to the transitions and if so, the nature of the change, i.e. deletion, addition or substitution and whether or not, they were effective.

This thesis looks at cohesion in writing at a basic level. Therefore, I classified revisions of transitions in terms of their use before and after revision under three categories:

- 1) All transitions were used accurately
- 2) Transitions used but more than one were inaccurate.
- 3) No transitions used

The number of students under each category was counted before and after revision. After revision, I looked at whether students under each abovementioned categories revised their transitions. Then the type of revisions was identified whether they were addition, deletion or substitution. It should be noted here that the third item in the self-assessment sheet in organisation section (see Appendix 6) directs students to check transitions between paragraphs rather than within the paragraph. Thus, the importance of transitions within paragraphs were highlighted and discussed during training session.

3.8.6.3 Language section:

This section directed students to revise mistakes in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, subject-verb agreement, consistent verb-tense and word order. This section of the self-assessment sheet was analysed quantitatively as the changes in this section could be easily counted. In order to count the mistakes students made during writing before and after revision, tables (see Appendix 16) were assigned to each piece of writing to enable the researcher to count the mistakes. These tables were as follows:

a- Before revision table

After I collected both the students' first writing drafts and revised texts, a table (see Table 4.16) was attached to each student's writing to locate and count the mistakes in accordance with the various criteria mentioned above. The table shows the total number of students that made mistakes in each criterion and the number of mistakes made in each criterion by all students in the first draft of their writing.

b- After revision table

This table (see Table 4.17) was used for each post-revision draft to trace the changes made in the criteria mentioned before. The table shows the number of students who made and who did not make corrections in each language criterion. It also shows the number of mistakes corrected and the number of those mistakes which have not been corrected.

c- Other mistakes

Table 4.18 is used to identify any other mistakes in language that are not stated in the self-assessment sheet. This may refer to correction of articles, plural, pronoun, sentence structure, fragment, wrong form and run on sentence.

All the changes included in the language section are considered surface changes. This is due to the fact that any changes in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, subject-verb agreement, consistent verb-tense and word order do not usually affect the meaning of the writing.

3.8.7 Students' responses to the post-study feedback form

To answer research question 3 regarding the students' opinion of the self-assessment sheet, all the students' responses (i.e. 70 students) in the experimental group were analysed. For the first and second statements in the feedback form, where students had been given a scale of measurement of agreement, I assigned codes (i.e. 1-4) for these raw data (feedback form responses). These indicate the level of their agreement towards the effectiveness of the self-assessment technique and the level of difficulty faced using this technique for question 2. The number and percentage of students are then counted and calculated.

Regarding the last question, in which students have to rank the three sections of the self-assessment sheet (i.e. content, organisation and language), I assigned codes (i.e. 1-3) for the raw data, indicating the difficulty with which the students tackled each section in the self-assessment sheet. Then, I counted the number of students with each answer.

Some students provided further comments regarding the use of the self-assessment technique. These comments were written in the self-assessment sheet on the last page in the comments area. Appendix 11 provides examples of comments, although these will be discussed in Chapter 4.

3.8.8 Questionnaire responses from participants in the UK

To get a wider view of how Arabic & English writing are taught in Libya, questionnaire responses were analysed from four different aspects. These aspects are participants' previous experiences of studying writing in both languages, difficulties in writing, participants' opinions on revising writing and participants' views on assessing writing and their comments.

A table was designed using Word (see Appendix 9) and I manually transferred the responses from the questionnaires into a table. I put each question number as a column heading, and used one row for each person's answers. Then I assigned each answer a code. I went through each respondent's questionnaire in turn, adding in the codes. After I had entered the data from all the questionnaires into a table, I showed it to one of the raters I had used to assess the essays to check some of the data for accuracy. If there were inconsistencies, I would check the data again. When I made sure that all the data was accurate, I manually calculated how many people selected each response.

For the open ended questions, I listed all the responses (see Appendix 10) that I had received from twelve participants. I then identified common themes and responses. I went on to count the number of the responses that applied to each of these themes.

3.9 Difficulty in data analysis

There was considerable challenge in attempting to describe and investigate revision in the students' writing. Each category (content, organisation, and language) needed a different approach to analysis. Regarding content, I had to be able to describe what a "good" essay might look like according to some writing guides. Hence, for each of these categories, I have what would be considered an "ideal" introduction, body paragraph/s and conclusion. As discussed earlier, I used these as a guide in determining the quality of the revisions. Moreover, as I had to look at two distinct levels of students and two different levels of revision, analysis of content revisions was not a straightforward process.

Furthermore, analysis of revisions concerning organisation was also challenging especially for item 2 & 3 which asked students to include one main idea in each paragraph and to revise transitions to achieve cohesion in writing. It was very difficult to consider whether a particular revision was effective or not; especially revisions made by those who were in the bottom ten in each group. It was difficult as some students revised and assigned one main idea to each paragraph but could not provide enough supporting details; resulting in writing that had one paragraph with one main idea. Yet, the paragraphs became very short, especially the body paragraphs. Another difficulty that emerged was the categorisation of supporting details, as some revisions were better categorised as content than organisation. I had to be very careful about how to assess these revisions. Some revisions to ideas were considered effective and successful although some of the paragraphs were very short.

The other challenge in analysing revision in the organisation section is the revision of transitions. The self-assessment sheet directed students to revise transitions to achieve cohesion between paragraphs. As a result, most students revised transitions between paragraphs rather than within a paragraph. This resulted in writing where paragraphs are cohesive, but ideas within paragraphs are not well linked. However, there were some students who used and revised transitions within paragraphs.

Without the raters, it would have been very difficult to have maintained a clear system of analysis throughout. The calibration exercise was tremendously useful, as was returning to the data repeatedly to iron out possible inconsistencies. Despite all the help, the analysis was still challenging. At the same time, it was rewarding, particularly when the quality of the writing was improved with the use of the self-assessment sheet.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has highlighted the difficulties I faced when collecting the data for the present study. It has also provided a thorough description of the methodology applied in this study. Both the quantitative and qualitative elements of research and data collection have been presented. However much the analysis and data collection techniques have been justified, it could of course be said that a faultless study cannot exist. It must be recognised that the methodology outlined above has its inherent limitations and difficulties. In the following chapter, I will seek to elaborate on these limitations and difficulties. I shall also discuss in detail the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the current study are presented. They have been sequentially divided into five main sections to answer the research questions of the study. Section 4.2 highlights the findings related to the questionnaire results. The results of the questionnaire, to some extent, display the type of approach used to teach English and Arabic writing in Libya. It also demonstrates how these participants write and revise. Some of the questionnaire results will be used as evidence to support other results relating to the effect of revision and self-assessment in enhancing the Libyan students' proficiency in essay writing. The results follow the structure of the self-assessment sheet - content, organisation and language.

Section 4.3 reports the results of revision on the content of the students' essays in both groups, i.e. the experimental group and the control group, both before and after revision. This section is primarily concerned with revisions to the introduction, body paragraph/s and conclusion. Section 4.4 reports results of revision to the organisation aspect of their essays. The results presented in this section focus on revision to the physical structure of the essay and the internal organisation of the essay through the use and revision of transition words to achieve cohesion. Section 4.5 reports the results of revision to language in terms of grammar and mechanics of both the experimental and control groups. This section is divided into two main sub-sections. The first sub-section presents language mistakes before revision where the number of mistakes in each criterion and the number of students who made mistakes are presented. The second sub-section presents the number of mistakes in each criterion that were corrected accurately and the number that were left uncorrected after revision.

Finally, the last section, Section 4.6, reports the results of the post-study feedback form which was given to the experimental group of students only. The form was set to elicit students' responses and gauge their attitudes regarding the effectiveness of the self-assessment technique in helping them to improve their writing.

4.3 Questionnaire results

This section reports the results of the questionnaire responses (see Appendix 9) of the 32 Libyan participants from three perspectives: participants' background information, prior experience of studying writing in Arabic and English, and the perception of their own approaches to writing in both languages. The importance of the questionnaire results lies in it being helpful in interpreting and discussing results presented in the following data analysis sections (4.3, 4.4 & 4.5). It is also helpful in giving a first-hand account of the teaching of writing and experiences of Libyan students who were taught writing in this setting. There is very little research in this area and the questionnaire was helpful in clarifying the contextual background for the study.

4.2.1 The results of the questionnaire responses of participants' background information and responses to the teaching of English writing.

Thirty-two Libyan graduates who currently live in the UK completed the questionnaire (see Appendix 9 for questionnaire raw data). All the participants graduated from English departments in Libyan universities. The results of the questionnaire revealed that participants attended different universities in different parts of Libya. It also revealed that the participants had between 4 and 7 years of studying in English at university level until their graduation.

The questionnaire sought information about the Libyan students' previous experiences with how they were taught to write in Arabic and English. The results of questions 1, 2 and 3 indicated that all the participants attended public schools which means that they all had almost similar syllabuses having undergone the same curriculum. The results also showed that they studied Arabic writing for 6 years (starting from year four in primary school up to year nine in preparatory school) and studied English writing for 4 years until they graduated from university.

The results also showed that the language of instruction was English for 56% of the participants. In fact, most of these teachers who used only English were foreign teachers from a non-Arabic speaking country as explained by some of the participants who answered the open ended question in section four (see Appendix 10).

4.2.2 Difficulties with writing as a skill and the experience of learning to write

There is very little general research on the writing experiences of Libyan students. The purpose of my research is to look closely at the Libyan setting and to make suggestions on

how the teaching of writing may be improved. This section focuses mainly on questionnaire results regarding participants' prior experience with learning English and Arabic. It focuses on the difficulties that students face in learning to write in two languages, i.e. Arabic and English.

The main question that was asked was about the levels of difficulty participants encountered when they learned how to write in English and Arabic. Unsurprisingly, 100% of the Libyan participants had no difficulty in writing in Arabic. In contrast, none of the participants found writing in English easy, with almost 46% finding it very difficult.

Question 6 probed the issue of various aspects to do with writing in order to find out which aspects they found more difficult. The results show that nearly 90% of the participants find connecting and organising their ideas in the body of the essay as the most difficult aspect in writing. None of the participants reported any difficulty in writing an introduction or a conclusion in English or in Arabic. Results also showed that EFL Libyan students have difficulty in incorporating appropriate information into the body paragraph. In numerical terms, this was about 46%. 37% said that grammar was the most difficult aspect when it comes to writing in English. When it came to mechanics, only 7 out of 32 students found this aspect of writing difficult. However, this result is quite different from that of the writing produced by the students in the study. The students in the current study made numerous mistakes in mechanics. Partly, it could possibly be that the Libyans living in the UK may have now learnt strategies to deal with the mechanics and are reporting their current situation while the students in Libya may not have developed strategies to deal with mechanics as yet.

Question 14 was designed to find out about the techniques teachers used to teach them writing in both languages i.e. Arabic and English. The aim was to establish if the students were encouraged to revise their drafts. Participants chose as many techniques as was relevant to them. The results reveal that only two main techniques were used with Arabic writing. They either wrote in class (37%) or did their writing as homework at home (100%). With English writing, there were quite a range of different techniques used by English teachers. The most common techniques included learning about different patterns of organisation (90%), imitating the writing of other writers (84%), writing about a topic independently at home (90%), writing about a topic in class (100%), focusing on theoretical knowledge of writing (90%), doing grammar exercises (75%) and brain storming (53%). Importantly, none of the students were taught to peer-assess or self-assess their writing in either language.

Regarding the other issues around writing (i.e. planning and revising), 31% of the participants reported having difficulty with planning, while 84% have difficulty in revision, possibly linked to the fact that they reported not being taught how to revise. The results here are similar to the only other study I was able to find on revision in the Libyan context. This is a study by El-Aswad (2002). The results of his study also indicate that Libyan students have difficulty in revision. This is primarily due to them not being taught how to revise their work nor having been asked to revise their work in the first place. Only two participants said that they had written drafts for their writing. These results suggest that teachers simply assigned writing topics and expected students to write with minimum guidance. The two students who wrote drafts went on to indicate that their subsequent revisions were mere changes to grammar and mechanics only. This is probably because teachers in Libya focus mostly on grammar and mechanics when they teach.

Revision is the main focus of this study. The results from the questionnaire suggest that all the participants were not taught or encouraged to revise their writing. Question 13 explored the areas that participants found the most difficult to revise in their writing. The results suggest that the most difficult element in writing to revise for these participants was to apply their revision to their ideas. 56% found this the most difficult. The second most difficult element to revise was vocabulary choice, with 25% of the students finding this element challenging. This finding appears to be in line with the research by Aljidee (2011) and Eldokali (2014), who both found that Libyan university students have a very limited vocabulary bank and this limitation could make revising their vocabulary, additionally challenging. The responses to question 14 also showed that 94% of the participants think that the easiest element in writing to revise is capitalisation, followed by the revision of spelling (53%) and followed by punctuation (28%).

There was also a question (question 15) which investigated the methods that students were taught to help organise their ideas. The results showed that 100% of the students were taught to organise their essays into 3 distinct parts (i.e. introduction, body, and conclusion). In addition, 73% of the students were taught to follow a pattern of cause/ effect; problem/ solution when they went about organising their essays.

4.2.3 Assessment of writing

Given that the key focus on the current study is on self-assessment, it seemed valuable to explore the experiences of these participants around the assessment of writing. The

questionnaire sought specific information regarding the participants' previous experiences of their teachers' assessment of their writing. Results of questions 16 & 17 indicated that Libyan students studying English would be asked to write about topics they had written about previously or would be given a list of topics before the exams. 70 % of the participants reported writing on topics they had previously encountered and 75% said that their teachers always provided them with a list of topics from which one or two were usually included in the exam. The students therefore have an indication of the likely topics that may appear in their exams. These results suggest that the examination may not be an accurate reflection of their writing ability during an exam. While this is not necessarily a problem from a process writing viewpoint (where the emphasis is on the process of producing writing and not the final product), it does pose some problems if it should be the case that students memorise their essays for reproduction during an examination.

Question 18 investigated what the students thought were the criteria their teachers emphasised when grading students' writing. The participants were asked to indicate by ticking off all that they thought was relevant. In response to this question, the majority of the participants thought their teachers, when grading their English writing, emphasised the following: correct grammar and spelling (90%), using good examples and details (53%) organisation of ideas (47%) clarity of ideas (37%), neatness (37%). In addition, 47% of the participants said that apart from correct grammar, they did not know what else their teachers looked for when they graded their writing in English. For Arabic writing, more than 40% of the participants thought that their Arabic writing teachers focused on the length of paper, neatness and good handwriting. However, about 47% of the participants did not know what their teachers looked at when assessing their Arabic writing. This is a mixed result, indicating that there may be some assumptions that the participants are making. What it does also suggest, is that there are priorities that may be in the forefront of students' minds when they write, given their perception of what their teachers might look out for in their essay. Following on from Question 18, Question 19 investigated how teachers in Libya who taught Arabic and English indicate errors in students' writing. The results presented indicated that the majority of Arabic writing teachers, as answered by (81%) of the participants, only provide the final grade without identifying any errors. When teachers did indicate errors, about 18% of the participants reported that their teachers identified spelling mistakes in Arabic writing, while the remaining participants (81%) reported that their teachers identified

errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation and that they did not pay attention to the ideas expressed.

The questions on assessment reveal how students in Libya might prioritise their work when they produce a piece of writing. In both languages, it appears that the focus of error identification in any assessment is rather superficial and that there appears to be little consideration for issues of content and organisation. The utilisation of the self-assessment sheet in this study could be valuable for a student's writing development as it encourages the student to not only focus on just getting the spelling right but also encourages the student to improve on other aspects of writing during the revision stage.

4.2.4 Participants' comments on studying and teaching English writing

In the last section of the questionnaire, participants were asked if they would add any information regarding the teaching of writing in Libya. 12 out of 32 participants commented on this section (for all participants' comments, see Appendix 10). The following are a summary of the main points the participants had mentioned:

4.2.4.1 Writing in Arabic

- Writing in Arabic is very easy.
- There are no clear or defined techniques in teaching Arabic writing.
- Teachers assign a topic and they write about it at home.
- In teaching Arabic language, the focus is on teaching grammar.
- Students do not write introductions, body paragraph/s or conclusions in their Arabic writing. They may write about a subject in two or more pages copying directly from an Arabic source without paragraphing. They do not appear to be aware of the significance of copying directly from a text.

4.2.4.2 Writing in English

- Teaching is of a low standard.
- Writing in English is the most difficult skill in English language learning skills.
- Teachers teach students about writing coherently but do not pay close attention in practice.

- Writing teachers usually begin teaching students how to write a paragraph (i.e. topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentences).
- In years 3 & 4, students start to write an essay of three paragraphs i.e. introductory paragraph, body paragraph/s and concluding paragraph
- There is a significant focus to teaching grammar.
- Teachers also focus on various aspects like spelling, punctuation, grammar mistakes, and organisation with little emphasis on content.
- In the exam, teachers often give them a list of topics where one of the topics given would appear in the exam.
- Participants think new techniques should be integrated in the Libyan classrooms to teach writing.

The questionnaire results suggest that the way in which Arabic and English writing in Libya is taught is significantly different. Arabic writing is not considered as an independent subject to be taught in the Libyan classrooms. The teaching and assessment of Arabic is integrated with other topics such as reading, dictation and grammar. All these topics come under one main subject 'Arabic language'. In Arabic writing, students are normally given a topic not to be completed in class but as a homework exercise. No pattern of organisation is taught to students. The students are merely required to write about a topic at home and the teacher has to grade the writing using their very own self-developed writing rubric.

However, teaching writing in English is different from Arabic writing. When being taught to write in English, the students are taught different types of ways to organise and carry out their written task. Students are taught how to organise and present their ideas in different paragraphs; i.e. introduction, body and conclusion. They are also taught grammar during writing lessons. The results showed that more attention is paid to the form and structure of the writing and that the lessons are much more focussed than they appear to be in the Arabic writing class. We do need to bear in mind that these are results reported by the participants in a questionnaire and while they give us an indication of the differences, a true assessment of these differences can only be made with the help of classroom observation and comparison.

Revision and the process of self-assessment is the main subject of the present study. More than 93% of the participants answered in the questionnaire that they were never taught how to revise their writing. 100% of the participants were not aware of self-assessment or used it in their writing. Surprisingly, this is despite the academic study of self-assessment having been

in the field of writing education for many decades, although perhaps not in focus in countries like Libya.

The results here have provided us with some background information related to the manner in which the teaching of English writing is carried out in Libya. These results also help us to have a better understanding of the revision practices that the students employ when they carry out their revision. The next few sections report the results of the study with the findings based on what was learnt during the course of using the self-assessment sheet.

4.3 Results related to the students' revision of essay content

In order to answer the first and second research questions posed in this study (see 1.2.1) in terms of content, both the original and revised essays of 40 students from both groups were compared. The comparison displays what type of revision i.e. surface or meaning (see Table 3.5) revisions these students made. It also highlights the influence revision has on improving the overall quality of the essay.

In discussing the influence of revision on the content of the students' writing, it assesses the actual changes the students made to the introduction, body paragraph(s) and conclusion of their essays before and after revision. It also demarcates the changes made by those who used the self-assessment sheet (experimental group) and those who did not (control group).

The first item in the content section of the self-assessment sheet looks at how students introduce the topic they are asked to write on. The students are required to self-assess their writing and to see if they have given a clear indication of the purpose of their writing and if they have provided background information to the topic. The second item relates to how students develop their topic. This requires them to assess whether the main ideas stated in the introduction are supported by specific examples, reasons, facts, details or evidence. The last item of the content section is to evaluate whether students bring their essays to an end by summarising the main points in their writing.

4.3.1 Effect of revision on EFL students' introduction

In order to answer the first and second research questions posed in this study, the data gathered from 40 students in both groups were analysed (20 students from the experimental group and 20 students from the control group). Since the assessment sheet was developed using scoring rubrics (see 3.6.2.1), writing guide books (Trzeciak&

Mackay, 1994; Hilton &Hyder, 1995; Rutkowska, 1997; Bailey, 2006; Warburton, 2007; Bailey 2011 &Fuggle 2011), and research studies (Aly, 2005, Xudong, 2003; Schulzrinne, 2008; and Pearce, 2012), the results are analysed bearing these in mind. In particular, writing guide books and research studies provide a useful point of reference to the discussion of these results.

Based on a number of guide books and research studies, it appears that in order for an introduction to qualify as an introduction (i.e. the opening of an essay) and be further classified as a good introductory paragraph, it is expected that the introduction presents a background to the topic and ends with a thesis statement (a single sentence that states the main points to be covered in the essay). While this may vary in different writing situations and different genres, for the genre of an essay and the teaching context in this study, this would be a reasonable definition to work with. Therefore, the key features of a successful introduction for the purposes of this study are:

- To provide a brief background to the topic
- To present a purpose statement (usually at the end of the introduction)

By analysing the work using these features which typify a good introduction, we will be able to establish the differences in students' introductions before and after revision. In the next few sections, I will discuss the different types of introductions in student writing in the data and discuss the influence of the self-assessment sheet in revising these introductions.

4.3.1.1 Types of introduction in students' writing

Having analysed the essays of the students in both the experimental and control groups, it was found that students provided different types of introductions to their essays. In this section, the term 'introduction' refers to two types of introductions used by a student - a 'clear introduction' or an 'unclear introduction' (see Table 3.5). A clear introduction would be one which displays the key features of an introduction by providing background information about the topic and presenting the purpose of the writing. In the category of what I have labelled 'unclear introduction' are two types as seen in the data; (a) one or two introductory sentences with repetition of the words of the title with no purpose (i.e. thesis statement) and an (b) unclear introduction with a vague or misleading purpose (as determined by the rest of the direction of the essay).The following Tables 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3 present the number of students from each group with each type of introduction, both before and after

revision. The tables also illustrate examples of each type of introduction. The examples are taken from both groups before revision.

Introduction: type 1 clear introduction

Types of introduction	Number of essays (20) from each group				Title
	Before revision		After revision		Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town
Clear introduction	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Example
Number of students	8	11	14	12	(1) There are many advantages and disadvantages to living in a big city or a small town. (2) The differences are based on the type of lifestyle available. Living in both places is completely different in many aspects, such as friends and neighbours, shopping, entertainment and services. (3) All these aspects will be discussed in detail in the following paragraph.
Percentage	40%	55%	70%	60%	

Table 4.1 Number of essays with clear introduction from both groups with an example

In the above table, some students in both groups wrote a ‘clear introduction’ to their essays. Sentences 1 & 2 in the above example provide a brief background to the topic stating a direct thesis statement by telling the reader what is going to be discussed in the body paragraph(s). The student starts with a general topic sentence (1) and then provides (2) additional information about the topic. Then, in sentence 3, the student narrows down the introduction by stating that only the aspects which were mentioned previously will be discussed in the body paragraph. It is what the entire essay is going to be about. This gives the reader an idea of what to expect next and the structure of the essay.

The difference here in terms of the influence of the self-assessment sheet is minimal when we consider the overall results, as both groups have produced ‘clear’ introductions after revision. In fact, before revision there is evidence of 3 more students having ‘clear’ introductions in the control group than the experimental group. However, the self-assessment sheet appears to have made a difference to the students in the experimental group, given that proportionately more of them are producing a clear introduction after revision.

Introduction: type 2 (a) unclear introduction

Types of introduction	Number of Essays (20 students from each group)				Title
Unclear introduction (a) One or two introductory sentences with repetition of the words of the title.	Before revision		After revision		Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town
	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Example
Number of students	8	5	3	4	There are many differences between living in a big city and a small town.
Percentage	40%	25%	15%	20%	

Table 4.2 Number of essays with one introductory sentence from both groups and an example

As shown in Table 4.2, the example does not give a clear indication of the content of the essay and the student here only repeats the title of the essay. It also does not state the purpose of the writing which is one of the most important elements of a good introduction as indicated by a number of experts in the field (Xudong, 2003; Lane, 2004; Warburton, 2007; Bailey, 2011; Fuggle, 2011; Livingston, 2012). (See Appendix 21& Appendix 22 for students' essay samples of both groups). After revision, there is improvement in the introductions of those in the experimental group. This improvement is not noticed in the control group, where one more student appears to have produced a clear introduction.

Introduction: type 2 (b) unclear introduction

Types of introduction	Number of Essays (20 Ss from each group)				Title
Unclear introduction type 2 (b) misleading	Before revision		After revision		Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town
	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Examples
Number of students	4	4	3	4	In a big city social life the relationship between people is not strong. because every person living lonely. but in a small town social life the relationship between people is very strong because every person living in a family with them and they are conected with love and emotions and feelings and hapits.
Percentage	20%	20%	15%	20%	

Table 4.3 Number of essays with unclear introduction from both groups and an example

Apart from the mistakes in spelling and capitalisation which are discussed in greater detail in Section 4.5, the example in Table 4.3 presents an introductory paragraph where the introduction is vague and does not state the purpose of writing the essay. Having read the introduction, the reader is likely to assume that the essay is going to be about social life in town and the city, but this is not the case. In the body paragraph, the student wrote about other differences, such as living costs, education and job opportunities, therefore rendering such an introduction misleading.

As we can see in Tables 4.1, 4.2, & 4.3 the number of the students with clear and unclear introductions before revision in both groups is almost the same. Although 8 out of 20 students in the experimental group wrote a clear introduction to their essays before revision, some improvement was noticed after using the self-assessment sheet during revision of a second draft by the students. This is shown from the increase in the number of students producing a clear introduction after revision. 12 out of 20 had a clear introduction after revision in the experimental group. However, only two students in the control group as presented in Tables 4.2 & 4.3 revised their introduction.

4.3.1.2 Types of revisions (surface/meaning) to introduction

Using the taxonomy for analysing revision in the current study, two concepts i.e. surface and meaning revisions have been used to explain the types of revisions that have been made (see 3.8.2). I will consider what type of revision students made in both groups. In the next section I classify revision into two types; surface and meaning revisions and give examples of students' introduction from both groups before and after revision.

Having compared the students' introductions before and after revision of both groups, it was the students who used the self-assessment sheet who made more surface and meaning revisions than those who did not use the self-assessment sheet. As there were no examples where students made only meaning revisions (i.e. meaning revisions without any surface revisions), I classified the students' revisions as shown in the following table.

	Total revisions to introduction		Type of revisions			
	Total N0 of students revised introduction 20Ss from each group		surface only		Both meaning & surface	
Groups	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.
Number of students	12	2	7	1	5	1
Percentage	60%	10%	35%	5%	25%	5%

Table 4.4 Number of students who made surface and meaning revision to introduction in both groups

Table 4.4 presents the total number of students who revised their introductions, the number of students and the type of revisions made by students in both groups. The revisions here were analysed and quantified by myself and the raters who participated in the current study (See section 3.8.1). Although the students in both groups share similar proficiency levels (See Appendix 23), 60% of the students in the experimental group revised their introductions, while in the control group, only 10% of the students revised their introductions. This may indicate that the use of the self-assessment sheet prompts inexperienced Libyan students to revise their introductions. Most studies (Harris, 1997; Taras, 2003; Aly, 2005; Wang, 2007; Oscarson, 2009; Honsa, 2013) reviewed in the present study (see 2.5 & 2.5.1), show that when student undertake self-assessment, there is a positive effect on the writing ability of the students. In addition to showing a positive effect, this study broadens research in the field by also considering the types of revisions students make in their writing that go on to enhance their writing. The following section provides examples of types of revisions to the introduction sections of essays by both groups.

Type 1: Surface revisions to the introduction:

As presented in Table 4.4 above, 12 students in the experimental group and 2 students from the control group revised their introductions. From an initial close reading of the revised writing, I was able to classify the majority of these as surface revisions. This was then confirmed by the raters. Most surface revisions of content are considered ‘cosmetic’ (Min, 2006) implying that such revisions serve to make the text look better.

In the following examples, revision (identified as additions, substitutions or deletions) resulted in changes at different linguistic levels (words, phrases and sentences).

Type 1: Surface revisions to introduction made by a student in the experimental group:

As previously presented in Table 4.4, 60% of the students in the experimental group revised their introduction as a response to the self-assessment sheet provided. The students' surface revisions were primarily to do with addition (which was the most common type in the data), substitution and deletion at three different linguistic levels: i.e. word, phrase or sentence level. Instead of providing an example of each level, the following Example 4.1 displays characteristics of all three mentioned levels. More importantly, it also emphasises how, while it may be useful to categorise revisions on these levels, it is also quite useful to see revisions occurring in a text as a whole.

Example 4.1 Surface revisions to introduction made by a student in the experimental group (See Appendix 21, pp. 329- 330)

Title Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town	
First draft	Revised draft
(1) There are many differences between the life in a city and the life in the town. (2) Living in town is good and sometimes bad. (3) Living in city is the same. (4) I know the difference between the two palces because I lived in the two. (5) The difference is in everything in food, social life, traffic and education.	(1) There are many differences between the life in a city and the life in the town. (2) Living in town <u>has its advantages and disadvantages.</u> (3) Living in city is the same. (4) <u>I can tell the</u> differences between the two <u>places in details</u> because I experienced living <u>in both.</u> (5) <u>From my own experience I can say that the differences are</u> in everything <u>especially in</u> food, social life, traffic and education.

***Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

In the revised version of sentence 2, the substitution of the phrase 'advantages and disadvantages' creates a surface change. The student also adds the phrases 'I can tell', 'I can say' and 'From my experience', which provide a clearer explanation of their position in the revised version than it does in the original text. These phrases introduced in the revised text help the reader understand this is a personal viewpoint of the student, based on their own experience. There is one instance of a word level change from 'two' to 'in both'.

In the above Example 4.1, the student initially provided a type 1 introduction (see Table 4.4) where he introduces the topic, gives a general background and provides a direct thesis statement. Therefore, the introduction is classified as a type 1 in both the original and revised drafts. The surface revisions made here are considered as such as they do not affect the meaning of the introduction.

What we do need to consider is the actual influence of the self-assessment sheet as this is the fundamental purpose of this study. Since this particular introduction in question displayed the characteristics that were identified as key features of the introduction (i.e. both before revision and after revision the introduction is classified as a ‘clear introduction’), it would be difficult to say conclusively that the self-assessment sheet had a direct influence on the writing. Instead, the conclusion that can be drawn from this example is that self-assessment sheet may have motivated the writer to reconsider the way in which he had written the introduction, making additions and substitutions where necessary to clarify his viewpoints. The students in the experimental group also had a training session on how to revise and what to look for when revising. After using the self-assessment sheet, making surface revisions as the ones in Example 4.1 possibly point to the impact of training and additional support during revision where the student is able to reflect on his own work and make some revisions which improve the introduction. This finding, correlates with findings of previous studies (Aly, 2004; Khodadady & Khodabakhshzade, 2012; Javaherbakhsh, 2010; Wang 2007) which endorse the effectiveness of self-assessment in writing by stating that self-assessment techniques improve writing skills. On the other hand, this finding contradicts with Diab’s (2011) finding where self-editors (0%) in that study did not improve their introductory paragraph despite being provided with a self-editing sheet, whereas peer editors (100%) were able to revise and improve their introductory paragraph. This finding also suggests that encouraging students to revise may help students to look again at their writing which is something that participants in the questionnaire reported as not happening often enough in their previous experiences of being in writing classrooms in Libya.

Type1: Surface revisions to introduction made by a student in the control group:

As mentioned earlier, only 2 out of 20 students in the control group revised their introduction. Example 4.2 provides an example of surface revisions made to the introduction by a student from the control group. This is the only example of a surface revision to the introduction from all the data in the control group.

Example 4.2 Surface revisions to introduction made by a student in the control (See Appendix 22, pp.359-360)

Title	Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town	
	First draft	Revised draft
	There are many differences in the lifestyle of living in a big city or a small town. (2) We will discuss the advantages and	There are many differences in the lifestyle of living in a big city or a small town. (2) I willdiscuss the advantages and disadvantages

disadvantages and consider how they can help a person make the choice about where to live and what is best for them.	<u>of both places.</u> (3) <u>And I will also</u> consider how they can help a person make the choice about where to live <u>whether in city or town</u> and what is best for them.
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***Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

As we can see in Example 4.2 the student revised his introduction by substituting [we] with [I] in sentence (2) of the revised draft. The student also made three additions at phrase level which did not affect the meaning of the introduction but made the student's viewpoint clearer. The introduction in the first draft comes under introduction type 1 'clear introduction' as the purpose is stated fairly clearly, although there are some revisions to it. The students in my data display an ability, albeit to a limited extent, to revise despite being inexperienced writers. Previous studies by Sommers (1980), Hayes and Flower (1986), Hayes (1996), and Wallace et al. (1996) illustrate that learners do not normally revise in a spontaneous manner at the optimum level and instead require direct instruction to encourage revision. Sze (2002), in one of the participant interviews conducted at the completion of each draft in his study, indicates that one of the participants said that he rarely read his writing for purposes of revision for both timed writing in class and take-home assignments: 'I'm seldom asked to revise by my teachers in school. I don't feel the need to revise and improve my work. When I finish writing an essay, I just put it away or hand it in' (Sze, 2002, p.30). In addition, Zamel (1985) points out that although teachers suggest students ought to revise their texts, they do not provide for or request further revision explicitly, nor do they explain the benefits of revision. Conrad and Goldstein (1999) also indicate that incompetent L2 student writers seldom make self-initiated revisions. In this study, there is some evidence of this for the control group. There were only two examples of self-initiated revisions, and given that these writers are inexperienced and have a low proficiency in English, this is useful to note. It indicates that it is not impossible for them to revise, but perhaps the strategies used in classrooms and the way in which writing is taught might help them discover revision as an important stage of the writing process.

Type 2: Meaning revisions to introduction:

Table 4.4 shows that 25% of the students in the experimental group made meaning and surface revisions to their essay introduction while only 1 student (5%) in the control group made a meaning and surface revision to their introduction. Those who revised for meaning in

both groups improved the quality of their revised essay by adding new information or by altering the content of their introduction. The following examples show meaning revisions to the introduction by students from both groups.

Type 2: Meaning revisions to introduction made by a student in the experimental group:

All the students who made meaning revisions also made surface revisions, particularly concerning language and mechanics (see Appendix 21 & 22, pp...for more samples of students' essays from both groups). In 4.3 below, I provide an example of meaning revision to introduction made by a student in the experimental group using the self-assessment sheet.

Example 4.3 Meaning revisions to introduction made by a student in the experimental group (See Appendix 21)

Title	The Differences between living in a Big City and a Small Town	
	First draft	Revised draft
	(1) This essay shall discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both living in a big city and living in a small town. (2) After reading it you shall be able to decide whether you want to live in a city or town.	(1) <u>There are many differences between the lifestyles of people that live in a city and people that live in a town.</u> (2) This essay shall discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both living in a big city and living in a small town. (3) After reading it you shall <u>have more information on what it is like to live in both places and</u> be able to <u>decide whether</u> you <u>prefer</u> to live in a city or town. (4) <u>The advantages and disadvantages I shall discuss regarding social life, fresh air, living costs, education, hospitals and job opportunities.</u>

* **Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

As we can see from Example 4.3, the student wrote two sentences as an introduction for his essay in the first draft. The two sentences do not give much background about the topic, but it does tell the overall purpose. However, after revising the first draft using the self-assessment sheet, the student managed to provide a more complete introduction. Here, the student has developed background information to provide a framework for the argument through the addition of a sentence (1) and phrases (3). In sentence (4) the student added a detailed purpose statement for the writing. This statement did not exist in the first draft and the addition of the sentence lead to what could be interpreted as a meaning revision i.e. there is new information - in the revised draft the student mentions exactly what aspects of living in both places he is going to cover in the body paragraph/s.

Example (4.3) shows the particular benefits that the implementation of self-assessment can have on students' writing. It shows that the meaning revisions brought about through the addition of sentences can create a good quality piece of writing with more direction. In this student's introduction, we can see that revision becomes much more than a re-wording activity; it instead creates visible improvements to writing quality. Writing is a process of discovery, and writers do not always produce their best draft when they first get started. So revision is a chance for them to look closely at what they have written. For example, a writer could look again at the purpose in writing and ask: Does my introduction state clearly what I intend to do? Will my aims be clear to my readers? As Zinsser (2014) reports, these are useful questions when looking at introductions.

The self-assessment sheet and possibly to some extent, the training session seems to have helped the writer review the writing holistically. The first item in the self-assessment sheet in the content section reminds the student to check whether the introduction provided a clear indication of the topic and purpose. In the training session (3.7.1), examples of previous essays written by former students (see Appendix 13) were analysed and discussed by using the self-assessment sheet. Training on how to use the self-assessment sheet is very important for students to be able to apply it to their revision. This supports Beach's (1997) views who indicated that the students' ability to revise may be affected by the students' lack of training in how to perform self-assessment, their 'not [being] accustomed to critically detaching themselves from their writing' (1979, p.118), and their lack of strong motivation to perform self-assessment. In addition, the self-assessment sheet and the guidance sheet (see Appendix 6 & Appendix 12) provided the students with a guide to help them revise their introduction. This supports the idea introduced by Kieft et al, (2007) who indicate that the self-assessment sheet creates a revision strategy that helps a student with an underdeveloped writing strategy.

Example 4.3 demonstrates that revision is not always fixing the commas and spelling. Revision is a process of re thinking the paper: reconsidering arguments, reviewing evidence, refining purpose and reorganizing presentation (Zinsser, 2014). For the inexperienced writer in this example, revision appears to have made a positive change to the writing.

Type 2: Meaning revisions to introduction made by a student in the control group:

Although most students participating in this study share a similar level of proficiency, 90% of the students in the control group did not revise their essay introductions, indicating that it may not be proficiency that affects a writer's ability to revise. The following example is the

only example from the data of the control group which demonstrates how the student revised their writing (a self-initiated revision).

Example 4.4 Meaning revisions to introduction made by a student in the control group (see Appendix 22, pp.366-367)

Title	The Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town	
First draft	Revised draft	
(1) The difference between big city and a small town is big especially in social life and pollution.	(1) The difference between Living in a city or a small town is <u>really</u> big. (2) The differences are especially in social life and pollution. (3) <u>Each aspect will be discussed separately in the following paragraphs.</u>	

* **Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

In the above example, the student wrote only one sentence in the first draft which in some way gave an indication of what the essay is going to be about. It was a rewording of the essay title (type 2) with an indication of possible points, although it is not explicit that these are the points that would be discussed. However, in the revised version, sentences 2 & 3 provide a clearer indication to the reader that two aspects i.e. ‘social life’ and ‘pollution’ are most important and that these will be discussed in the essay. The addition of the last sentence also gives an indication of the organisation of the essay.

Improvements to the introduction can also have a secondary advantage in terms of leading to or providing the impetus for further revision of the body paragraph/s. Through altering the introduction, the students may prepare a structure which the body paragraph will naturally follow, specifically dealing with each aspect mentioned. This has a positive bearing on essay organisation and consequently essay coherence.

Despite the fact that students in the control group revised their writing without the guidance of the self-assessment sheet, there was only one student who revised his introduction by making a meaning revision. Deciding the quality and types of revision students made was not a straight forward process (for more details, see 3.9). Students’ changes after revision were in some cases difficult to categorise. This will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

Having looked at the revisions students made in both groups to their introduction, the following section (4.3.2) presents the results relating to revision made to the body paragraphs in the essays.

4.3.2 Effect of revision on EFL students' body paragraph

The analysis of this section investigates whether the body paragraph/s in students' writing in both groups develop the main ideas of the essay by providing supporting information such as examples, facts, reasons and/or evidence. The quality of the revision and the types of revisions made to the body paragraph/s by 20 students from each group are checked accordingly before and after revision. The emphasis of this section is on the content of the body paragraph. This means that I am looking at how students supported and developed the main idea presented in the introduction and how they revised the content of the body paragraph, for example, by adding new information, ideas examples or reasons during revision.

The quality of a body paragraph within a piece of writing is judged according to certain criteria and guidelines used for developing body paragraph (see 3.8.6.1, B). Some writing guide books (Trzeciak & Mackay, 1994; Hilton & Hyder, 1995; Rutkowska, 1997; Bailey, 2006; Warburton, 2007; Bailey, 2011) were used to develop the self-assessment sheet and also to analyse the writing.

4.3.2.1 Types of body paragraph/s in students' writing

Having taken into consideration the criteria and elements that form a body paragraph discussed in different academic writing sources (for example, Kiefer, 1983; Bailey, 2011; Evans, 2011) and writing scoring rubrics (for example, Jacobs et al.; 1981 Weir, 1990; Hamp-Lyons, 1991), I analysed the data accordingly (for more details, see Table 3.7). The analysis and coding of data collected from students of both groups revealed that students' writing of body paragraph comes under three broad categories:

- 1- One sentence or short sentences with no discernible ideas {body paragraph}.
- 2- Body paragraph with underdeveloped ideas.
- 3- Developed body paragraph with developed ideas containing supporting details.

Tables 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 below provide the types of body paragraph/s found in students' writing, number of students with each type and examples from different students from both groups before revision. Examples in Table 4.5 illustrate body paragraphs with one sentence; example in Table 4.6 demonstrates a body paragraph with under developed ideas; and the example in Table 4.7 illustrates a body paragraph with developed ideas.

1- One sentence {body paragraph}

Type of body paragraph	Number of students				Examples of one sentence {body paragraph}
	Before revision		After revision		
	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	
One sentence body paragraph	2	2	1	2	(a) In The big city there's many factories which produce a lot of bad material that pollut air, while The town there is a lot of trees which produce oxygen. (b) But there is a lot of disadvantaged in town and advantages in The big city. (c) Expensive city. (d) In The town there is no a lot of schools but in The city there's many schools and The education of city is better than The town.
Percentage	10%	10%	5%	10%	

Table 4.5 Numbers and percentages of student in both groups with type 1 of body paragraphs before and after revision

Examples presented in Table 4.5 illustrate a very small number of students who had a body paragraph which comprised of only a single sentence and phrase. Examples (a) & (b) in the table were taken from students in the control group and the other two were taken from the experimental group. It shows that some paragraphs (as the student considers it to be) may only consist of two words, such as (c) in the above table. However, after revision, only one of the students with this type of body paragraph in the experimental group who was provided with the self-assessment sheet made some revision to their body paragraph, whereas none in the control group did so.

The following table illustrates the second type of body paragraph, number of students with each type before and after revision and an example of this type.

Type of body paragraph	Number of students				Example of undeveloped body paragraph
	Before revision		After revision		
	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	
Body paragraph with under developed ideas	11	10	9	10	(a) The cost living in city is very much while that in the town is very cheap because the population in the city more than the town. (b) In the city has good schools and good hospitals because the education is

Percentage	55%	50%	45%	50%	better than the town. (c) The town is clean with out pollution.
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Table 4.6 Number of student with types of body paragraphs before and after revision

The body paragraph presented in Table 4.6 is an example of an undeveloped body paragraph. What can be seen as a positive here is the list of points that the writer puts forward in the writing. There is an attempt to provide reasons, although this is not always clear – for example, it is not clear why the cost of living is high due to a higher population in the city. The final sentence (c) is left underdeveloped. But, it is an attempt by the writer to engage with the argument.

The following table presents the last type of students' body paragraph and the number of students who provided this type of body paragraph before revision and a corresponding example to illustrate. The example presented in the following table is the first body paragraph of the original essay (This essay has two body paragraphs, see Appendix 21 for more samples of students' essay).

Type of body Paragraph	Number of students				Example
	Before revision		After revision		
	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	
Developed body paragraph	8	7	9	7	(1)I would like to discuss the differences of living in a big city. (2) Most important difference living in the city is access to good schools and hospitals so you can always get a good education and good medical treatment. (3) There are many high quality shops where you can buy many things and very good public transport. (4) On the other hand there are many disadvantages to this way of life, for example people in the city are less likely to make friendly relationships with each other. (5) The cost of living in a city is also very high and many things are expensive, in addition it is a very noisy environment in which to live and the air is very polluted from the traffic and public transport. I will discuss the positives and negatives of the small town later. (6)
Percentage	40%	35%	45%	35%	

Table 4.7 Number of student in both groups before and after revision with an example of developed body paragraph

The student introduces the central idea and key concept of the paragraph through the use of a topic sentence at the start of the paragraph. The student develops the central idea of this paragraph that deals with the advantages and disadvantages of living in a city. In the last sentence, the student also informs the reader that this paragraph is complete and that the essay is going move on to another point; namely the advantages and disadvantages of living in a town. We can see that this student has provided adequate details and examples to support the ideas stated in the body paragraph. The body paragraph was further revised after using the self-assessment assessment (see revised draft in Appendix 21, pp. 331-332)

Tables 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 display the number of students in both groups that produced each of the three types of body paragraph described above. This applies to both before and after revision. As we can see from these examples, there are no discernible differences between the numbers of students who wrote different types of body paragraph/s. This seems to suggest that most students in both groups produce similar types of writing. However, there are a small number of students who used the self-assessment sheet who have developed their body paragraph/s after revision. While this result does not give a strong indication of the influence of the self-assessment sheet overall, in the few cases noted above, it appears to have made a noticeable, although small, difference.

4.3.2.2 Types of revision (surface/meaning) to body paragraphs

As illustrated previously in Tables 4.5, 4.6 & 4.7, only students in the experimental group revised their body paragraphs after revision by using the self-assessment sheet. Therefore, this section focuses only on types of revision that these students made after revision. To examine the quality and type of revisions made, this section presents some examples of writing where the first and second drafts of body paragraphs are compared.

Similar to the ‘introductory’ section, revisions made to the body paragraph/s were divided into two types: meaning & surface revisions. Table 4.8 illustrates the number and percentage of students who revised their body paragraph/s in both categories.

	Total revisions to body paragraph/s		Type of revisions			
	Total N0 of students revised body paragraph/s 20Ss from each group		Surface only		Both meaning & surface	
Groups	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.
Number of students	7	0	4	0	3	0
Percentage	35%	0%	20%	0%	15%	0%

Table 4.8 Number of students who made surface and meaning revision to body paragraph/s in both groups

Table 4.8 presents the total number of students who revised the body paragraph of their essays and the number of students with each type of revision from both groups. The revisions are identified this way according to the raters who participated in the current study. As mentioned previously, although the students in both groups share similar proficiency levels (see Appendix 23), 7 out of 20 students in the experimental group revised their body paragraph/s, while in the control group none of the students revised their body paragraphs. Although the number of the students who revised their body paragraph is not significant, in comparison with those who did so in the control group, it may indicate that the use of the self-assessment sheet prompts students in the experimental group to revise their body paragraph/s. In general, students tended to make more surface revisions to body paragraph/s than meaning revisions. This may be due to the reasons stated below as reported by the Libyan participants in answering the questionnaire questions (see 4.2.2).

- Not having enough training in using self-assessment.
- Their limited vocabulary
- Not accustomed to revising their writing very often
- Not getting feedback on content when teachers correct their writing.
- And revising ideas is one of the most difficult tasks in revision

The following section provides examples of types of revisions to the body paragraph by students in the experimental group.

Type 1 Surface revision to body paragraph(s):

The following example (4.5) illustrates an example of a surface revision by a student in the experimental group after revision using self-assessment sheet.

Example 4.5 Surface revision to body paragraph made by a student in the experimental group

First Body Paragraph	Revised Body Paragraph
Secondly, the advantages and disadvantages of living in a small town. The way of living in a small town is very simple and people share almost everything with each other. It's very quite and the air is fresh it doesn't cost a lot in living in a small town. That was the good qualities about living in a small town, but on the other hand There are a lot of bad qualities about living in it. First of all there is no good schools and hospitals, no public transportation and the opportunities of getting a job are very less.	(1) Secondly, the advantages and disadvantages of living in a small town. (2) <u>Living in town is completely different from living in city in many ways.</u> (3) The way of living in a small town is very simple and people share almost everything with each other. (4) It's very <u>quiet</u> and the air is fresh. (5) <u>It</u> doesn't cost a lot in living in a small town. (6) That was the good qualities about living in a small town, but on the other hand, there are a lot of bad qualities about living in it. (7) First of all, <u>there are</u> no good schools and hospitals, no public transportation and the opportunities of getting a job are very less.

***Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

In Example 4.5, the student added sentence (2) to his body paragraph stating that life in these places is different in more than one aspect. This is a surface change as there was no alteration to the meaning of the paragraph as a result of the inclusion. The sentence did not add any new information to the paragraph. However, what is important to note about this sentence is that it helps provide a transition to the information which follows. It could be that the self-assessment sheet might have prompted him to add a sentence to clarify his purpose. In Sentence (4) the student corrected a spelling mistake. In sentences (5) and (7) the student corrected a series of punctuation and grammatical mistakes which will be considered in greater detail in Section 4.5. This student's revision introduced a surface change that can be viewed as a good attempt to make changes and improve the writing. Although the addition of sentence (3) did not add or affect the meaning in any way, it has a function which Min (2006,

p.141) in his study calls ‘cosmetic’ (mentioned earlier in the chapter); that the revision ‘makes the text look better’.

Besides additions, there were also substitutions and deletions of words and phrases. Most word substitutions involved those of transition words and the substitution of the word ‘benefits’ with ‘advantages’ and ‘bad’ with ‘disadvantages’ or ‘negative’. The difficulty faced by students in terms of word substitution may have resulted from the fact that most Libyan students have a limited range of vocabulary in English, as suggested by Othman (2009) and as reported by the questionnaire results in the current study. Deletion during revision did not occur at a great frequency in the students’ writing. There were some deletions in body paragraphs at two levels such as word and sentence level. This may be due to the fact that EFL students make an effort to produce a sentence or paragraph, leading to a possible reluctance to delete information even if they knew it is not relevant or appropriate. This was a sentiment expressed by some of the participants of this study and reported in section 4.2.4.

Self-assessment appears to provide students the opportunity to work independently and make a few changes which appear to have positive consequences to their writing.

Type 2 Meaning revisions to body paragraph(s):

Only 3 out of 20 students in the experimental group made changes to the body paragraph which led to meaning revisions. The following example illustrates meaning revisions made by a student in the experimental group.

Example 4.6 Meaning revision to body paragraph made by a student in the experimental group

First Body Paragraph	Revised Body Paragraph
The most important advantage and disadvantage is good school and the hospital. The children in the town Find that the way to go to school is not easy and not comfortable especially in the winter and also there are no enough books and chairs. But in the big city there are a lot of schools to learn the children and the hospitals is having high quality and material.	(1) <u>Living in a big city certainly have some disadvantages and can be difficult. This is because of the fresh air being polluted from traffic, smoke and the effects of manufacturing whereas in the small town the air is fresher and clean because there is less traffic and factories.</u> (2) <u>The way you live in a city is also very different, particularly in terms of social life.</u> (3) <u>In a city people are busier from their jobs and don’t always live close to family but in a small town people are more friendly with neighbours and have closer relationships.</u> (4) <u>However, living in a small town can have its bad points too. The main disadvantage in a small town is the lack of good schools and hospitals.</u> (5) Children in the town can find it difficult as <u>often the school facilities are not as good as a city</u> , there are <u>sometimes not</u> enough

	books and <u>places to sit for all the students.</u> (6) <u>In a big city the children have a better education as there are more schools with high quality facilities.</u> (7) <u>Also in a big city the hospitals is better with care.</u>
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* **Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

The student made some alterations to his first paragraph. These alterations can be seen as meaning changes that improve the reading of the paragraph as a whole. However, it is the inclusion of a further paragraph that develops the argument as a whole. It can be argued that all additions of paragraphs are meaning changes as all information is new. In this example, the additional paragraph introduces new points to the essay. Both paragraphs highlight a series of different points linked to the main idea. The example provides evidence of how some Libyan EFL students are able to make revisions at paragraph level. The self-assessment sheet in this case might have worked as a reminder for the students to revise their writing. The students were encouraged to provide facts, examples, evidence to support their main ideas stated in the topic sentence. In Example 4.6, the student revised the writing and introduced an extra paragraph with more points. This type of revision can also be linked to the training session where students looked at examples that were similar (see Appendix 13 for the examples used during the training session). It demonstrates that illustrating what is possible to students could motivate revision.

An analysis of the above examples shows that additions at phrase and sentence level can include surface and meaning changes. While, all addition changes at word level in the body paragraph are surface revisions, as in these examples they do not necessarily introduce new information, all addition revisions at paragraph level in this data are analysed as meaning changes. As we can see from Example 4.6, the student was able to improve the body paragraph after revision using the self-assessment sheet and attending the training session. This highlights the possibility that participants who had never previously used self-assessment, never revised and had never been asked to revise or been motivated to revise, as suggested by Othman (2009) and El Aswad (2002), may possibly be able to revise if provided guidance. Having presented the results of the effect of content revision on both introduction and body paragraph/s; the following section reports on the results related to effect of revision and self-assessment on the conclusion section of the students' writing.

4.3.3 Effect of revision on EFL students' conclusion

The way in which an essay begins is often seen as the most vital component in how the reader responds to that piece and how the theme of the writing is understood. Similarly, in

concluding a piece of work, the writer has the opportunity to make a strong and hopefully, a lasting impression. According to Mayers (2006) and Kisting (2007), the conclusion usually supports the central idea of the paper that the student has developed in the body paragraph. Consequently, it should strengthen the main point of the text and comprise more than just a repetition of the thesis statement.

The analysis of this section investigates whether the conclusion in the writing produced by the student in both groups summarises the main points. The quality of the revision and the types of revisions made to the conclusion by 20 students from each group is analysed accordingly before and after revision. In this section, I am looking at how students bring their writing to a conclusion, for example, by summarising the main points of the writing, giving an opinion and/or recommendation. The quality of a conclusion within a piece of writing is judged according to certain criteria and guidelines used for grading essays (see 3.9.1.1 C).

The following section 4.3.3.1 presents the results of revisions made to the conclusion by students in both groups; experimental and control. It will therefore shed light on the types of conclusions found in the writing produced by students as well as their quality before and after revision.

4.3.3.1 Types of conclusion in the writing of students

In this study, I analysed the concluding paragraph of each students' writing of both groups according to the following typology established in Chapter 3 (see 3.7) in which four categories were set up:

- No conclusion
- Unclear conclusion, usually a repetition of the title
- Clear conclusion which provides:
 - Summary of the writing, stating the obvious
 - Opinion or addressing the reader/giving recommendations

Type of conclusion	Number & percentage of students				Examples of conclusion
	Before revision		After revision		
	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	
1- No conclusion	2	4	0	4	The city has many ways of communications with other people and the world.
%	10%	20%	0%	20%	
2-One sentence conclusion	9	9	6	8	Finally, these are the advantages and disadvantages of both places.
%	45%	45%	30%	40%	
3-Clear conclusion (a) Summary (b) Opinion or recommendation	8	7	14	8	Finally, living in both places has both advantages and disadvantages. Obviously, as we can see from the above discussion living in city has more advantages than living in town. The only aspect that cannot be found in town is fresh air. Regarding organic food, now there are a lot of shops in city that sell this kind of food. In my opinion, Living in city with better education, hospitals and more job opportunity is more convenient to me and to my family. This means living in one of these places depends on what you need.
	40%	35%	70%	40%	

Table 4.9 Types of conclusion in students' writing in the experimental & control groups before and after revision

As we can see from Table 4.9, there is a difference in both groups in terms of the numbers of students who provided a clear conclusion before revision. The number of students who had clear conclusions after revision has increased proportionately in the experimental group. In addition, the number of students who had no conclusion has decreased in both groups after revision.

Regarding the examples stated in Table 4.9, the first example is a typical example of a student who did not provide a concluding paragraph of the essay. Instead, the student wrote an irrelevant single sentence as a conclusion for the writing which I have placed in the category of ‘no conclusion’. The second example is just a single sentence which was provided at the end of the student’s essay to finish the writing and repeats the title of the essay. The last example is an example of clear conclusion provided by one of the students. This type of conclusion shows that the student provided a summary to the writing by stating the most important differences that had been discussed in the body paragraph. Subsequently, provided an opinion of which might be the better place to live in.

This section presented the results regarding the types of conclusion students in both groups produced in terms of the number and the percentage of students with each type before and after revision. The following section presents results regarding the type of revision students in both groups made after revision i.e. surface and meaning revisions.

4.3.3.2 Types of revision (surface and meaning) to conclusion

Through the examination of the conclusions provided by the students, I found that after revision, students, especially those in the experimental group, made some revisions in the manner in which they chose to eventually conclude their essays. These changes can be categorised as additions and substitutions, but no deletions were recorded in the revised drafts of both groups. Additions to concluding paragraphs occurred at different levels, i.e. word, phrase, sentence and paragraph levels, whereas substitutions were made at word level only. As for the control group, there were only two students who revised their conclusion as illustrated in Table 4.10.

	Total revisions to conclusion		Type of revisions			
	Total N0 of students revised conclusion 20Ss from each group		Surface only		Both meaning & surface	
Groups	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)
Number of students	12	2	7	1	5	1
Percentage	60%	10%	35%	5%	25%	5%

Table 4.10 Number and percentage of students who made surface and meaning revision to conclusion in both groups

Table 4.10 shows that of the students in the experimental group who revised their conclusion using the self-assessment sheet, had a combination of surface revisions only and both surface and meaning revisions. Regarding the control group, there were only two students who revised their conclusion. The revisions made were one surface and one meaning and surface revisions. Examples of both types of revision made by students in both groups are presented below.

Type 1 Surface revision to conclusion by a student in the experimental group:

Surface revisions to concluding paragraphs refers to changes made by adding words, phrases or sometimes sentences that improve the quality of the conclusion without affecting the meaning. This means that no new information or ideas have been added or deleted. The conclusion below illustrates how an addition of sentences in the revised draft improved the quality of the conclusion but did not affect the meaning found in the original draft.

Example 4.7 Surface revisions to conclusion made by a student in the experimental group

First conclusion	Revised conclusion
(1) Living in a town or in a city (2) One has its own advantages and disadvantages and may what I consider as disadvantages is a good thing for others. (3) The differences mentioned above are some of the huge difference between living in a city or in a town. (4) And every person can decide what is better to him.	(1) <u>The answer to the question which is a better place to live is difficult to find.</u> (2) <u>Each</u> one has its own advantages and disadvantages and <u>what I may</u> consider a disadvantage <u>another person may consider</u> a good thing. (3) The differences <u>I have</u> mentioned are <u>only</u> some of the huge differences <u>in the style of</u> living in a city or a town <u>and it is up to each person to decide which is best for them.</u>

***Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

The student in Example 4.7, provided type 1 conclusion (clear) before and after revision. However, the self-assessment sheet encouraged the student to look again at the writing to see if the first draft could be revised. The addition of sentence (1), the first sentence of the paragraph, forms a topic statement by referring to the question posed in the introduction. This improves the connection to sentence (2) where the writer attempts to form a summary of the main points in the writing and includes a personal opinion. The consolidation of sentences (3) & (4) in the revised draft (sentence 3) allows the writer to end the piece with a statement that takes into account the points raised earlier in the piece and makes some attempt at a recommendation. While the revision is considered a surface revision, it is nonetheless, a revision that has enhanced the quality of the text.

Type 1(b) Surface revisions to the conclusion by a student in the control group

As previously stated in Table 4.10 only one student had a surface revision to the conclusion. The following example illustrates an example from the students' writing in the control group, which shows the changes the student made after revision.

Example 4.8 Surface revision to conclusion made by a student in the control group (See Appendix 22, pp. 364-365)

First conclusion	Revised conclusion
(1) According to these differences it seems that it is difficult to say which is better to live in a big city or a small town.	(1) <u>Finally,</u> according to differences, it seems that it is difficult to say which is better to live in a big city or a small town. (2) <u>However, one can make a decision according what his priorities are.</u>

***Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

The student makes two revisions. The addition of the word 'finally' indicates that the writing is coming to an end and provides a transition into a summary of what was written before. Also, the addition of the sentence at the end, that 'one can make a decision according what his priorities are', changes the conclusion from type two (i.e. conclusion with one single sentence) to type 3 (i.e. clear conclusion). Yet, the revision made does not change the existing meaning.

The revisions illustrated in the previous example are made by a student in the control group. This is the only revision of content made to the conclusion which led to surface revision. Due to limitations mentioned previously (see 3.2) and which I will revisit in Chapter 5, I am unable to be conclusive about the significance of these observations.

Type 2 Meaning revision to conclusion:

Meaning revisions performed on the conclusion are those which affect the quality of writing either by summarising the main points of the writing or by providing recommendations or opinions in a way that brings closure to the reader, while concurrently providing a closing perspective on the topic. Examples of meaning revision made by students in both groups are illustrated below.

Type 2 Meaning revision to the conclusion by a student in the experimental group

The example discussed below illustrates the meaning revision a student made to his conclusion when he was asked to revise the writing using the self-assessment sheet.

Example: 4.9 Meaning revisions to conclusion made by a student in the experimental group (s

First draft	Revised draft
Finally, every place in a city or in a town has its good points and bad or negative points that suits people in both ways.(1)	(1) <u>In conclusion I believe you cannot say one place is better to live than the other but each has its good and bad points. (2) The advantages to each place suit different people in different ways. (3) For people that value a social life and fresh air then the town is the best choice but for those that prefer better job opportunities and good education then the city is better for them.</u>

Bold underlined refers to changes to the text made by the student

The above example demonstrates a conclusion which is a short paragraph that is typical of the common approach to ending a piece of writing. Looking at the example above, we can see that the student did not summarise the point of the writing or give an opinion or recommendation in the first draft. The student restates a point of view. After revising the essay with the benefit of utilising the self-assessment sheet, the student was able to make revisions to the writing. Sentence (1) forms a topic sentence and introduces a balance of opinion. A transition word is substituted ('finally' to 'in conclusion') at the start of the sentence. In sentence (2) the writer attempts to form a summary of the main points in the writing and in sentence (3) the writer ends the piece with a statement that takes into account the points raised earlier and provides a recommendation to the reader. The conclusion changes from one concluding sentence (i.e. type 2) to a paragraph with several sentences (i.e. type 3 clear conclusion). The sentences summarise the main points stated in the body paragraph as guided by the self-assessment sheet. The additional sentences add more information to the conclusion. This is considered a meaning revision, as there is new information here that was not present in the first draft.

Type 2 Meaning revision to conclusion by a student in the control group

Only 1 out of 20 students from the control group who revised their writing had a meaning revision to his conclusion. Example 4.10 illustrates the meaning revision made by that student.

Example: 4.10 Meaning revisions to conclusion made by a student in the control group (See Appendix 22, pp.359-360)

First draft	Revised draft
The school and hospitals in the small city aren't so good as the ones in big city The hospital is very important in the city Becase people (1).	<u>Finally, I love big city because I can go out and I can find different jobs when I finish university (1). And I can find everything near to my house (2).</u>

***Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

As can be seen from the above example; the conclusion in the first draft comes under type (1) 'no conclusion'. The conclusion in the first draft does not summarise the main points of the writing. Neither does it give a recommendation or state the writer's opinion, whereas the conclusion in the revised draft became clearer as the student added the word finally to alert the reader that the writing is coming to an end. The revision made here is considered a meaning revision as the revised conclusion provided closure to the writing and was connected directly to the essay. Reasons behind how and what made this student in the control group revise his writing were not investigated due to current study limitations. However, in general, asking students to revise or giving them a chance to look again at their writing may encourage students to make changes.

As most of the Libyan participants confirmed that they have not been provided with the opportunity to revise their writing (see 4.2), the use of the self-assessment sheet was seen as a way to provide the opportunity to reread their writing and make revisions accordingly. Introducing the self-assessment process to EFL students through the revision stage has added great value as stated by Kieft et al., (2007) and Wang (2007) who found that instruction that focused on a revision strategy was most helpful for writers with an undeveloped writing strategy. It is possible that it may be rather difficult to introduce this type of self-assessment during writing, as students find it difficult to produce writing in the first place. Expecting them to bear in mind some of the points in the self-assessment sheet while they carry out their writing may very well be a task which is quite difficult. However, introducing it during revision is probably the best time to do so, as students would have completed their writing and would have had the opportunity to review their work.

Having presented the results related to how EFL Libyan university students that participated in the present study revised the content of their writing, the following section reports on results related to the effect of revision on organisation of the students' writing.

4.4 Results of students' revision of essay organisation

The focus of the second section of the self-assessment sheet is on the organisation of students' writing in both groups before and after revision. This section is meant to help students revise the physical structure of their essay paragraphs (4.4.1). It evaluates whether or not these paragraphs discuss one main idea (usually located in the topic sentence) which advises the reader of the subject to be discussed. If the remainder of the paragraph does not fulfil the "promise" of the topic sentence, the paragraph will lack unity, coherence and adequate development (see earlier section 4.2 for a discussion of this). Organisation of ideas can sometimes be achieved through the use of transition.

4.4.1 Organisational revisions, essay physical structure

As previously highlighted (see 3.7.1), I asked students to write at least three paragraphs in their essays. This is because most students in Libya are taught to write this way [see questionnaire results (4.2.4.2)]. It can also help them structure and organise their writing where the introduction, body paragraph and conclusion can be provided in separate paragraphs. The first thing to be discussed, therefore, in the organisation section is the physical structure of students' essays. Although students were asked to write at least three paragraphs in their writing (introductory, body and concluding), some did not follow these guidelines. By reviewing and analysing the students' writing, three different structures were found:

- Structure (1): writing that consists of three or more paragraphs.
- Structure (2): writing that consists of one paragraph.
- Structure (3): writing that consists of two paragraphs.

This structure refers to the writing that consisted of:

- Structure (3) a: one combined paragraph that included introduction and body paragraphs together and a separate conclusion.
- Structure (3) b: one separate introductory paragraph, a body and concluding paragraph combined together in one paragraph.

See Appendix 21& Appendix 22 for examples of the different structures mentioned above.

The main focus when analysing physical structure was how exactly students in both groups organised their essay structure before and after revision. It displays the type of revision and the quality of the revision that the students made to their essay structure as a response to the self-assessment sheet.

It is important to clarify here that I have considered revisions made to essay paragraphing as structural revisions and not content revisions. While content and organisation go hand-in-hand when one writes, for the purposes of this study, when revision is being studied from different perspectives, it is useful to consider these separately. All these structural revisions are therefore considered surface revisions, as they do not alter the meaning of the text. What they lead to are an improvement in the organisation of the students' writing. Such revisions influence the way students present their ideas (see section 4.2.4). The results of the analysis reveal that the structural revisions of paragraphing refer to moving whole paragraph(s), creating new paragraph(s) from existing ones, or joining paragraphs together as discussed below.

4.4.1.1 Essay structure before and after revision

Table 4.11 presents the number and percentage of students of both groups who demonstrated a writing structure (1) which is typically considered as the optimal structure that students are often asked to produce. The table also presents the number of students who followed structures (2) and (3) which are not what they were asked to produce for this task.

Types of Essay structure	Number of students							
	Before revision				After revision			
	Exp. (20)		Cont. (20)		Exp. (20)		Cont. (20)	
	N0	%	N0	%	N0	%	N0	%
Structure (1) writing consisting of three paragraphs or more.	11	55%	12	60%	15	75%	12	60%
Structure (2) & (3) writing consisted of one or two paragraphs only.	9	45%	8	40%	5	25%	8	40%

Table 4.11 Number and percentage of students in both groups with different paragraphing structures before and after revision

In Table 4.11, students in both groups organised their writing into paragraphs even before revision, taking into consideration the structure of the essay that they were asked to write in the way that the researcher and teacher instructed them. This was also supported by the questionnaire results in which 100% of participants confirmed that teachers in Libya taught them to organise their ideas by writing an introduction, body paragraph and conclusion. As presented in Table 4.11, the number of students with different essay structures in both groups is similar. However, when asked to revise, students in the control group did not make any attempts to revise their writing. However, more than 25% of the students in the experimental group who used the self-assessment sheet revised the physical structure of their writing. These revisions were identified as being in the form of consolidation, distribution and addition. The following section reports on the number of the students with each type of revision.

4.4.1.2 Types of revision to essay structure after revision

After revising their first draft, there were some attempts from students to organise their writing into paragraphs. These attempts were in some cases joining paragraphs together to create a unified paragraph (consolidation) and in other cases, students tried to divide a certain paragraph into two separate paragraphs (division and addition), especially the ‘body paragraph’. The number of students in both groups who made these revisions to their writing structure is presented in Table 4.12.

Organisational changes of essays structure	Students who joined paragraphs together (consolidation)		Students who divided paragraphs into smaller units (distribution)		Students who added a paragraph (addition)		Students who did not revise the essay structure		Total Number of students who revised physical structure	
	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.
Number of students	3	0	6	0	3	0	8	20	12	0
Percentage	15%	0%	30%	0%	15%	0%	40%	100%	60%	0%

Table 4.12 Number and percentage of students with types of paragraphing changes after revision

The above table presents the types of revisions students in both groups made in response to the self-assessment sheet given to them. For students in the experimental group, analysis of revision types to essay structure revealed that distribution, ranked as the highest type among the three possible ways in which they could have revised the physical structure of the text. These findings differ from previous studies that have investigated revision (Sato, 1991; Sengupta, 1998 and Min, 2006). Sato's Japanese college students, Sengupta's Hong Kong secondary students and university students in Taiwan used substitution most frequently, a lot more than addition and consolidation. Min (2006), on the other hand indicated that addition was not common among students. As presented in Table 4.12, most essays were revised for distribution. It can be argued that this might have an effect on idea development as well as the organisation of content, as some students might reorganise their ideas into separate paragraphs. In all the cases, the revisions are considered successful as they improve the quality of the writing, as discussed in the next few sections.

4.4.1.3 Effectiveness of the paragraph physical structure revisions

Having looked at the number of students who made some revisions to their paragraphing or essay structure, it was found that twelve out of twenty students in the experimental group revised their essay structure. A typical example is presented below and more examples of successful revision of physical structure can be found in (Appendix 21 pp. 309-338) as most of these examples are too long to be included within the chapter.

Example of revision to essay structure (experimental group)

Example 4.11 original Example of revision (experimental group)

First draft	Revised draft
In the city the pollution of the people more than the town if you live in the city you can now it's very very big and have bad traffic, the city have many shope and big shope have a good schools, and good hospitals but the city is very noisy. And very expensive and to live of rent the cost is very expensive and there's no fresh air the air is dierty the town is very	<u>First,</u> in the city the pollution of the people more than the town if you live in the city you can <u>know</u> it's very very big and have bad traffic, the city <u>has</u> many <u>shops</u> and big <u>shops</u> have a good schools, and good hospitals but the city is very noisy. <u>Second, living in city is</u> very expensive and to live of rent the cost is very expensive and there's no fresh air the air is <u>dirty</u> town is very

small than the city there is no many shopes like the town it have a hospital but small hospitql like the city no traffic if have a good fresh air and there is havnt many schools or nearly houses its very sheap to live or to reant.	small than the city there is no many <u>shops</u> like the town it have a hospital but small <u>hospital</u> like the city no traffic if have a good fresh air and <u>there are not</u> many schools or nearly houses its very <u>cheap</u> to live or to <u>rent</u>
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***Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

In the above example, the students' writing in the original consists of one body paragraph. In the first paragraph the student discusses traffic, the accessibility to shops, hospitals and living expenses in both places. In the revised draft, the student divides the body paragraphs into two paragraphs. In this case, the student has made an attempt at revision by dividing her points. However, it appears as if the student tried to write the differences of each place in separate paragraphs but was unable to achieve this when dividing the body paragraphs into two paragraphs. Unfortunately, for reasons detailed in Chapter 3, I could not conduct an interview with students to obtain their views and feedback and to find out their reasons for revising the writing the way they had done so (see 3.2 for more details). The discussion in the next section might shed some light on organisational issues and writing.

4.4.2 Organising ideas in each paragraph

By analysing this area, I am looking at the organisation of ideas within the writing. This second item of the organisation section encourages students to organise their ideas logically using a topic sentence that summarises the main idea of the text for each paragraph and is followed by supporting sentences. This was analysed by looking at the 'paragraph as a unit of thought with one adequately developed idea' as stated by Driscoll & Brizee (2013, p.3) who also suggest that to improve paragraphing in writing, one should try to: 'put only one main idea per paragraph' and 'aim for three to five or more sentences per paragraph'. Maddox (2009) points out that 'a traditional' paragraph has a topic sentence which states the main point to be elaborated, as well as extra sentences which elaborate the main point stated by the topic sentence. While this might present a limited view of essay writing and paragraphing, for the inexperienced writers in my data who have basic writing skills, this is probably a useful way to approach paragraphing.

In analysing the organisation section of the student texts, I am now looking at how students in both groups organised their writing and whether they revise their writing to state one main

idea in each paragraph. The main idea of the first paragraph is to introduce the topic to the reader. In this data, some students wrote about the advantages of living in a big city and the advantages of living in a small town in one paragraph, and the disadvantages of each place in another paragraph, which are both common structures.

4.4.2.1 Organising ideas in each paragraph before and after revision

Stating one main idea in each paragraph helps to achieve unity and fully develop the main idea by providing supporting information. Most researchers and scholars such as Spalding (2005), Driscoll & Brizee (2013), Bailey (2011) and various academic books on writing, emphasize that each paragraph should discuss one main idea and that no additional ideas should be introduced in the paragraph. This is a point that is debatable, as it probably depends largely on the genre of the writing and the proficiency levels of the writers. For writers with a generally low proficiency in English, this approach of having one idea per paragraph is possibly advisable as it is more easily achievable. This element (of having one main idea in each paragraph) was examined in students' writing by reading the whole text to see whether or not students organised their ideas in paragraphs. Table 4.13 presents the number of students in both groups whose paragraphs contained one main idea before and after revision in both groups.

Idea organisation within paragraph	Number of Students								Total number of students who revised this item			
	Before revision				After revision							
	Exp.(20)		Cont. (20)		Exp.(20)		Cont. (20)		Exp.		Cont.	
	N0	%	N0	%	N0	%	N0	%	No	%	N0	%
Each paragraph contains different ideas	10	50%	12	60%	7	35%	12	60%	6	60%	0	0%
Each paragraph contains one main idea	10	50%	8	40%	14	70%	8	40%				

Table 4.13 Number of students who did, and who did not include one idea in each paragraph before and after revision

As we can see from Table 4.13, all the students in the control group did not revise the organisation of their ideas when compared to the experimental group. When revising their first drafts, students were asked to check whether each paragraph in their writing contained one main idea. Although some students provided the correct paragraphing structure before revision (i.e. they had three or more paragraphs), the ideas written in the paragraph were not

considered to be sufficiently organised. The analysis shows that some students' essays in both groups exhibited physical structure but did not have internal organisation, as students jumped from one idea to another. This is why the number of students who included a correct structure in their essay was greater than those who organised their ideas after revision. It is useful to note, that the physical structure can have a positive effect on the organisation of ideas. For example, in the current study, some students had one body paragraph. In this case, a student could have one main idea in a paragraph such as 'advantages and disadvantages of living in town and city'. The student may then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both places in one paragraph. Whereas, those who have two body paragraphs or more may write about the advantages and disadvantages of each place in a separate paragraph or write about each aspect of living in both places separately and compare them to each other. For example, 'education' can be the main idea of the first body paragraph and 'social life' can be the main idea of the second body paragraph. The physical structure can lead to different internal structures of organisation.

The results presented in Table 4.13 indicate that there is a slight increase in the number of experimental group students who revised this element using the self-assessment sheet. This table only presents the number of students who revised this element without taking into consideration the effectiveness of these changes which I will consider in greater depth later. As we can see, 6 students revised this element as a response to the second item of the self-assessment sheet which encourages students to include one main idea for each paragraph. It did not come as a surprise to see that EFL students seemed unaware of the correct way to organise their ideas, as observed by Mojica (2010). Mojica's study looked into self-recognised writing problems and writing deficiencies in EFL writing and she indicated that the majority of students did not revise the organisation of their writing or take notice of how their ideas were organised in the post-writing stage. Also, Al-Khasawneh (2010, p.3) investigates the difficulties faced particularly by Arab postgraduate students in writing, and indicates that 'the students appeared to have many problems when writing in English, like not knowing how to organize their ideas'. This is possibly the result of a focus on basic writing tools such as grammar or vocabulary taking precedence over other issues due to an insufficient grasp of English on the whole in a country like Libya. In addition, the questionnaire results showed that most Libyan participants find that revision is very difficult as they are not used to revising their writing. Although most students in both groups in this study did not revise the organisation of their ideas, those who did made adequate revisions,

by ensuring that each paragraph had one main idea. An example that reflects these changes is presented below.

Example (4.12) ideas organisation before & after revision by a student in the experimental group

First draft	Revised draft
Some of differences between the city and the twon are related to social life as well as cost of living. In the city, every body acts like he wants without think of others, so there is no good relationship between them. I think the neighbours do not visit each other because they have not a time for that. Whereas in the twon, everybody looks for others, and he thinks for others, so there's a good relationship between them. Even the neighbours visit each other and help each other also. Another difference is related to cost of living. As we know because of developments in the city it helps a price to increase. Every thing in the city is more expensive than in the twon. People live in the town help each other. So living in a big city costs you more and makes you alone in the same time.	(1) <u>Firstly, I will discuss the bad side of living in the city. In a city the social life is difficult everyone is busy and there</u> aren't good relationships between people. (2) <u>Neighbours visit each other less and people have less time to spend with friends and family.</u> (3) <u>However in a town everybody looks after each other and takes time to think about family and neighbours and there are good relationships between people.</u> (4) Another main bad point of living <u>in a big city is the</u> cost of living. (5) <u>In a big city the</u> developments <u>have made living more expensive than a town so you could result in spending more money and having less strong relationships.</u> (6) (7) <u>However there are good sides to living in a big city. There are many more employment opportunities available and it is easier to find a job than in a smaller town.</u> (8) <u>In a town there are many difficulties in finding a job as there are less companies, shops, cafes and schools to work in.</u> (9) <u>On this point I think it is better to live in a city as there are many more chances to find good work.</u>

***Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

In the original draft of Example 4.12, the student introduced his paragraph by stating that he is going to write about 'social life' and the 'cost of living'. The student seemed to mention only the negative points of living in a big city, though this was improved in the revised draft, where the student used self-assessment to make improvements in the revised draft.

In the revised draft of example (4.12), the student made a positive revision to the organisation of ideas. The body of writing was divided into two distinct paragraphs. Each paragraph now contains one coherent central idea. The first discusses the negative aspects of a city compared with the positive aspects of a town, whilst the second paragraph discusses the positive aspects of living in a big city. The paragraphs follow a logical sequence of ideas and patterns, the

introduction of an aspect of life followed by the discussion of its implications in one place and then the other. Overall, the text is improved as each idea is presented separately in two paragraphs. In Sentence (1) in the revised draft, the student uses a transition to begin the sentence and introduces the first point supported by an example. Sentence (2) develops the argument raised in sentence (1) through stating a second related point. Sentence (3) states the opposing situation supported by reasons. The substitution of transition word 'whereas' for 'however' at the start of the sentence improves the cohesion of the paragraph. Sentence (4) the student introduces the next difference between the two places through a statement. Sentence (5) develops the statement made in sentence (4) through a reason and through the addition of a personal opinion. Sentence (6) presents the next difference and supports this with reasons and a comparison introduced by 'however'. In sentence (8), the student further develops the reason introduced in the previous sentence and includes examples to support his point. Finally, in sentence (9) the student uses a personal opinion to add weight to the final point of the paragraph.

As we can see from the above example, the self-assessment sheet and revision can have positive impact on the students writing. This could also be linked to the training session in which students had a chance to look at examples of other students' writing and how this element in the writing can be improved (see 3.7.1, visit 6).

In addition to the organisation of ideas achieved through physical structure, it is also achieved through the use of transition. Therefore, the following section reveals the results of the students' use of transition to achieve cohesion in their writing.

4.4.3 Use of transitional devices

The last item to be analysed in the organisation section is the use of transition words to create connections between sentences and paragraphs. Connected sentences and paragraphs create a form of writing that flows. In this section, I am focusing on how students in both groups used transitions before and after revision. I am looking at the various types of transitions the students used in their writing. These are transitions which are used between paragraphs and those within paragraphs. It also looks at revisions that the students made to transitions and looks at whether these revisions led to an improvement in text cohesion or not. While I recognise that transition words are only a very small aspect of organisation in the text, these are analysed in the study as they are an explicit element of writing classes in Libya (see questionnaire results in Section 4.2) taught explicitly to the students. This is the main reason I

am considering it as an item in the self-assessment sheet bearing in mind the broader pedagogical view that we ought to assess what we teach.

4.4.3.1 Use of transitions before and after revision

The use of transitions in writing helps students to organise their ideas in their writing and assists readers to read the writing smoothly. In their writing classes, students are typically provided with lists of transition words and are often taught how to use them. This section is used to see if students include transition devices in their writing and if they use them effectively (i.e. accurate usage according to function). By reading the students writing, some students in both groups used transition devices in their writing whereas some students did not use any transitions. Table 4.14 shows the number and percentage of these students.

Use of transitions	Number of students							
	Before revision				After revision			
	Exp. 20 Ss		Cont. 20 Ss		Exp. 20 Ss		Cont. 20 Ss	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
All transitions used were accurate	12	60%	11	55%	16	80%	11	55%
Transitions used but more than one transition is inaccurate	5	25%	7	35%	3	15%	7	35%
No transitions used	3	15%	2	10%	1	5%	2	10%

Table 4.14 Number of students in both groups who used transitions before and after revision

Table 4.14 presents the number of the students who used transitions in their writing. The results show that most of the students (except 3 in the experimental group and 2 in the control group) in both groups who participated in the present study used transitions in their writing before revision. All transitions that were used accurately were transitions between paragraphs. These transitions fulfilled their function to help the reader move smoothly from one paragraph to another. The most common transitions used were enumerative transitions between body paragraphs such as *first* and *second*, *firstly* and *secondly*. In the concluding paragraph, the most frequent transition words and phrases were *finally*, *in conclusion* and *to sum up*. More than 25% of the students in the experimental group who used the self-

assessment sheet made some revisions to their transitions after revising their first draft using the self-assessment sheet.

The results in this section are mixed and rather surprising. What we can see from the table is an unclear relationship between the self-assessment sheet and revision. The results from the experimental group show some positive influence – i.e. more students are making an attempt at revision. There is one less student in the category named ‘no transition’ and two more students who are using transitions, although not quite accurately. But, there is one less student using transitions accurately. This might mean that one student who was accurate before revision has now revised their writing and created an inaccurately used transition. While on the one hand the self-assessment sheet might have motivated the student to make a revision, on the other hand, the revision is inaccurate.

In the control group, we notice a different pattern. There is only one student who revised this element. It is difficult to explain this result without the benefit of an interview, but it appears as if students in the control group are not revising their transitions despite being taught these aspects of writing explicitly in class.

In the next part of this section, I look at the uses of transitions and the types of revisions to transitions as seen in the student texts.

Example 4.13 presents how transitions were used before and after revision by using the self-assessment sheet. For examples of students’ first and revised essays of both groups see (Appendix 21 & Appendix 22).

Example 4.13 Use of transitions

First draft	Revised draft
<p>There are a lot of differences between living in a big city or a small town.</p> <p>First, In a small town the best think that a fresh air moreover in the big city because there many ereed and the air is politic. in the big town we have many kind of traffic in contrast in a small town but the big twon is the batter because it comes in the cienter.</p> <p>The big town has a lot of good thinks in contrast in a small town also many people prefer to go a big town for interesting himselfes.</p> <p>In the small town we can living in cofortible also the best thing that find it in</p>	<p>There are a lot of differences between living in a big city or a small town. <u>Some of these differences are discussed below.</u></p> <p><u>Firstly, in the big town because there many cars and traffic the air is polluted. There are a lot of good things like good schools and hospitals and taxis. Employment opportunity is one of good thing about big town. people prefer to live in a big town.</u></p> <p><u>Secondly, in the small town the best thing is fresh air. Cost of living is less than big town. Fruits and vegetables are very fresh. People prefer to live in a small town.</u></p>

a big town that employment opportunities but in small town its less than a big town and cost of living but small town its less it is a nice when you living in a big town but in the same time it's better a small town. I know the big city is the better but I prefer a small town.	<u>At the end,</u> I know the big city is the better but I prefer a small town. <u>Anyone can choose where to live if has the ability.</u>
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***Bold underlined** refers to changes to the text made by the student

As we can see in Example 4.13, the first draft has only one transition device 'first' which is then revised to 'firstly' with a few other transitions added between paragraphs to signal the additional points and to signal the end of the discussion. This is a typical example of revisions that the students made in both groups.

Generally speaking, although the students in the experimental group managed to revise transitions between paragraphs, transitions between sentences were not revised. This may be a result of the use of the self-assessment sheet (see Appendix 6) which directs students to make their paragraphs cohesive through the use of transition words. The sheet does not explicitly say within paragraphs and this is a limitation of not having been able to pilot the self-assessment sheet. If I had been able to pilot the sheet and conduct an interview, perhaps the sheet could have been revised to make this point clearer to the students. However, there were 3 students in the experimental group who revised transition within paragraphs (Appendix 21, essay 5, 4 & 2).

When revising transitions, students made different types of revisions to the transitions in their texts. The following table presents the number of students, the types of revisions, i.e. additions, deletions or substitutions after using self-assessment. By analysing the students' writing after revision, it was found that some students in the experimental group revised their transitions through addition, deletion or substitution of certain transitions. Table 4.15 shows the type of these revisions.

Students	Type of revision changes to transitions					
	Addition		Deletion		Substitution	
	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.
Number of students	16	1	2	0	4	0
Percentage of students	65%	5%	7%	0%	28%	0%

Table 4.15 Numbers of students in both groups & type of revisions made to transitions

The table above presents the number of students who revised transitions in both groups. The most frequent type of revision to transitions is addition. Deletion is the least type of revision made in all the students' drafts. As raised earlier in this chapter, it is not uncommon for L2 writers to be reluctant to delete writing they have produced with great effort.

I noted that the majority of students used 'and', 'but', 'firstly', 'secondly', 'finally' and 'In conclusion' as linking words and phrases to connect sentences or ideas within the text. However, after revision with the use of the self-assessment sheet, 16 students used a variety of additional linking words and phrases such as 'therefore', 'however', 'in addition', 'consequently', 'for instance', 'for example', etc. The use of a variety of different linking words in their writing showed that the students were more aware of the transition words they were using and were attempting to increase the variety. While I acknowledge that the use of transitions is not solely responsible for good organisation, they can make organisation clearer and easier to follow. The questionnaire results suggest that 90% of the participants have difficulty in connecting and organising ideas. Additionally, numerous researchers in different countries including Libya in the Arab world have paid attention to the different aspects of cohesion that students identified as problematic for Arab learners (Al-Jarf, 2001; Zahida, 2007; Ahmed, 2010; Abushark, 2012; Attelisi, 2012; Jahin & Wafa, 2012). It is therefore heartening to note that the students are revising this aspect of their writing when they are making their revisions with the help of the self-assessment sheet.

4.5 Results of students' revision of essay language (mechanics and grammar)

This section presents and discusses the results of the study in terms of the impact made by the use of the self-assessment sheet on the revision of mechanics and grammar. Students in both groups were asked by the researcher and the teacher to revise potential language mistakes, i.e. mechanics and grammar. The elements that were investigated are spelling, capitalisation, punctuation, word order, subject verb agreement and consistent verb tense, as identified in research as typically problematic areas for L2 student writing. The students' revisions in this section are all considered surface revisions because revision or, in this case, error correction, rarely leads to meaning change. Mistakes were coded manually and counted and then put in tables. The analysis traced these mistakes before and after revision to see if the students were able to locate their mistakes and correct them.

The following section (4.5.1) presents the number of mistakes in grammar and mechanics that the students in both groups had in their writing.

4.5.1 Language mistakes before revision

This section presents the data analysis of the language mistakes students in both groups made during writing the first draft of their essays. The number of students making mistakes and the number of mistakes made in each category will be presented in the following tables.

Language criteria	Number of students with mistakes in each criterion before revision		Total number of mistakes from 40 students before revision	
	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)	Exp. (20)	Cont. (20)
Spelling	18	12	88	72
Capitalisation	11	7	18	13
Punctuation	14	15	22	27
Subject verb agreement	9	11	21	26
Consistent verb tense	11	13	15	18
Word order	5	10	8	11

Table 4.16 Number of students & mistakes in each criterion before self-assessment

Table 4.16 shows the number of the language mistakes students in both groups made in their writing. The number of mistakes in both groups was high; especially for the spelling and the punctuation categories. The table shows that before revision, 90% made mistakes in spelling and 91% made mistakes in punctuation. The high number of spelling and punctuation mistakes was also reported by Attlaily (2006) in his study in which he investigated the writing errors by Libyan university students of English. Among the forty essays, Attlaily reports that students had four-hundred and ninety six (496) spelling mistakes and three-hundred and eighty three (383) punctuation mistakes. In this study, students in both groups revised their mistakes in grammar and mechanics as presented in Section 4.5.2.

4.5.2 Language mistakes after revision

It is clear from Table 4.16 that most students in the experimental and control group made many mistakes, especially in spelling and punctuation. Students were given a chance to revise these mistakes using the self-assessment sheet provided for the experimental group, whereas, students in the control group revised without the self-assessment sheet. Many students especially in the experimental group were able to locate some of these mistakes and produce a better second draft of their writing. The following table presents the number of the mistakes that were corrected by the students and the number of mistakes that were not revised by students at this stage for both groups.

Language criteria	Number of mistakes not corrected		Number of mistakes corrected		Number of students who made corrections		Number of students who did not make corrections	
	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.
Spelling	16	62	72	10	16	6	4	14
Capitalisation	3	17	15	1	9	1	2	10
Punctuation	6	18	16	4	9	4	5	10
Sub-verb agreement	7	25	14	1	7	1	2	10
Consistent verb tense	3	14	12	1	10	1	1	10
Word order	3	7	2	1	2	1	3	4

Table 4.17 Number of uncorrected and corrected mistakes and the number of students making corrections in each criterion after self-assessment

It is surprising that these students have as many mistakes, given that they are university students majoring in English language and are expected to become English language teachers in subsequent years. Although the number of mistakes made by the students in the control group are fewer than those in the experimental group before revision in some criteria, the results presented in Table 4.17 show that students who used the self-assessment sheet appear to be able to locate most of the mistakes in their writing after they were asked to rewrite a

second draft. The following sub-sections present some examples of mistakes made by the students. Examples are drawn from the writing of both groups.

4.5.2.1 Spelling

Researchers (Ibrahim, 1978; Beck, 1979; El-Hibir& Al-Taha, 1992; Abdel-Aziz, 1993; Shokrpour & Fallahzadeh, 2007; Fender, 2008; Al-Saudi, 2013), find that spelling continues to be one of the foremost problems for EFL students and Arab learners. Not only is the number of spelling mistakes extremely high, but in many cases the spelling errors create difficulty for the reader in understanding meaning. Research on the reasons behind particular difficulties faced by Arab students in spelling was undertaken by Ibrahim (1978). He analysed spelling mistakes in the writing of undergraduate students at a Jordanian university. He concludes that the majority of spelling errors are made for one or more of the following reasons: the non-phonetic nature of English spelling, the differences between the sound systems of English and Arabic, analogy errors, inconsistent spelling in English word derivation, and transitional errors resulting from not knowing or over generalising a spelling rule. The example below shows how some of these mistakes are key orthography issues.

Note: All examples in this section may contain more than one mistake (i.e. spelling and word order, sentence structure or fragment) therefore, only the mistakes discussed under each criterion are highlighted in the examples.

Example (4.14)

The schools and hospitals in the small twonwent so good as in the big city so if you are thing about where to live, consida a wht of these benefits and make a deaision that is right for you.

The example above creates a situation where the reader might struggle to read some of the words used by the writer. The words that are underlined are those that are problematic. Other spelling mistakes do not create as much difficulty for reading, such as the one below:

Example (4.15)

The living in a big city Air is polluted and it is diffcult to breathe but in a small town air is fresh and people are health.

These mistakes that frequently occur with spelling among EFL learners are due to the 'great irregularity of spelling [in English] compared to the way the letters and words are actually pronounced. Arabic spelling, by contrast, is quite regular. Arabic phonemes are usually written in one and the same form wherever they occur' (Kharma&Hajjaj 1997, p.56).

Despite the variety of spelling problems encountered by the students, there have been no teaching or learning strategies reported by research which I am aware of that might assist the Libyan students in overcoming their difficulties. The self-assessment sheet in this study is a possible solution to help students to recognise, revise and correct their spelling errors by directing students to look at their writing again and to find out how they might correct these mistakes. It is still not a replacement for good teaching, but might be a way forward in a writing curriculum which might already be too full with other elements of writing to be taught effectively during a writing course. 32 students commented on the issue of spelling in the self-assessment sheet (in the 'areas requiring further work' section) as an element they recognised as requiring further work. This shows their awareness of the area as one in which they require support.

One student wrote as follows:

*I have problem with spelling. But I know when I write a word
it's spelled wrong but I have to write if I cannont find another
word that I know it's spelling. Better than not writing it.*

Another student adds:

*I don't have major problems in spelling, but only some words
especially words that have 'i' and 'e' like 'describe' or 'discribe'.
But I think self-assessment sheet makes us go and check the word in the
Dictionary whenever we revise so I don't forget it again.*

In the revised draft of the experimental group produced after application of the self-assessment sheet, the spelling mistakes were noticeably reduced in comparison to the spelling mistakes in the revised drafts of the control group. This finding correlates with Abdel-Aziz's (1993) finding that the integration of the self-correction approach which was used in that study resulted in the removal of the majority of mistakes in grammar, lexicon and spelling.

This shows that the self-assessment technique can be used in EFL classrooms to encourage students to revise and consequently improve their writing at the level of mechanics and grammar.

4.5.2.2 Capitalisation

Unlike punctuation and spelling, the capitalisation rule is considered straightforward and easy to remember, and consequently should not pose a problem for fourth year students majoring in English. As presented in Table 4.16, eleven students from the experimental group had and seven students from the control group had mistakes in this area. For example, some words were capitalised in the middle of a sentence without any justification as illustrated in the following example.

Example (4.16)

On the other hand There is a lot of advantages in big cities, for example. The hospitals in city better than that of town. The education in The town is not very good There is not a lot of schools. Both of city and town has advantages and disadvantages

After using the self-assessment sheet to revise their writing, students in the experimental group corrected most of these mistakes (see Table 4.17), however students in the control group did not revise their mistakes in this area except for one student. This might mean that the self-assessment sheet was able to draw the attention of the students to these errors and that they were able to make a positive revision.

4.5.2.3 Punctuation

Punctuation mistakes constitute another problem for the Libyan students who participated in this study as presented in Table 4.16. This shows that using the correct punctuation marks in English writing is a problem for the majority of Libyan university students.

The results of the data analysis show that a large number of students use incorrect punctuation marks, or frequently omit or misuse punctuation marks and replace them with conjunctions such as *and*, *but* or *so*. This creates run-on sentences. For example, some students' misuse or omit punctuation marks and link long sentences together as illustrated in the following example:

The star (*) denotes where the punctuation mark is needed, misplaced or omitted.

Example (4.17)

*The social life *for example* in the town is very Strong and there are good relationships even between neighbours, but in the city the people are too busy so they did not meet with each other even the member of the family, * In the townthe air is very pure *whereas in the city there is a very bad airpollution because of the traffic.*

In this example, although the intended meaning is not very difficult to retrieve, the student does not use commas where they should have had one and joins the sentences together using numerous commas instead of using a full stop. Most likely, the student intends to say the following: 'In town, the social life is very strong and neighbours have good relationships, whereas in city, people are too busy. Even family members do not visit each other. Another positive point about living in town is fresh air....etc.'

In addition to omitting punctuation marks, the student capitalises some words in the middle of the sentence: in particular they use an upper-case letter after the comma. This indicates that this student is unaware of the sentence boundary, where a capital letter should be used at the beginning of a new sentence and after a full stop. It could be argued that this is not important to the meaning, but in an educational context, especially where students are majoring in English and are expected to become English teachers, such mechanical problems are indeed very important. They need to be able to recognise how to capitalise in order to be able to teach it. These results support those of Johnstone (1991) who illustrates that the rules of Arabic punctuation are very different to those of English punctuation. Although Arabic punctuation marks are similar in shape to English punctuation marks, with the exception of the comma which is reversed (,) , they are used very differently, as the punctuation structure in Arabic is much freer than in English (Smith 2003). This results in Arab learners finding it difficult to implement the correct punctuation system in English. These results support earlier findings by Charteris-Black (1997), who investigated students 'tendencies to avoid', punctuation ... altogether by substituting a coordinate conjunction, for example, 'but' [and] 'and'' (Charteris-Black, 1997. p.23).

Some of the other reasons that could possibly account for Libyan students to be weak in punctuation are as follows. Firstly, most teachers do not pay attention to teaching punctuation in class as they consider it of little importance. Even if they do teach it, they do not consider it to be of great importance in writing; with the exception of full stops and commas. Secondly, teachers do not correct punctuation mistakes in the students' writing as they focus on grammar and spelling as priorities (see 4.2.3). My own experience as a teacher suggests that students are used to being spoon-fed from the pre-university stages.

4.5.2.4 Subject verb agreement

Lack of subject-verb agreement can be seen in some essays of the students' writing of both groups. The following two examples illustrate some of these mistakes:

Example (4.18)

People who live in the big cities doesn't have time to socialize or to do friendly activities.

Example (4.19)

There is good schools and universities.

Although students in the experimental group made more subject-verb agreement mistakes than the control group, they corrected 50% of the mistakes after revision as presented in Table 4.17. On the whole, it seems that students made fewer mistakes and less revision in this area compared to spelling, capitalisation and punctuation. The reason behind this was not investigated (it is outside the scope of this study), but could possibly be due to spelling and capitalisation mistakes being easier to identify and rectify in comparison to grammar mistakes.

4.5.2.5 Consistent verb-tense

Rather surprisingly, the number of mistakes with consistent verb tense was not excessive. Given that this is a grammatical and not a mechanical feature and might possibly be more difficult to master, produce and revise, this was an unusual finding in this data. Some students produced an incorrect verb form or omitted the verb in their writing. The following are examples taken from first drafts of students' essays from both groups.

Example (4.20)

(a) *In town, people met each other everyday.*

(b) *In a Town communication (missing verb) very easy and you can connect with another people in any time, but in Town very diffecalt Towent from place To another*

Example (4.21)

The hospital in big city is more ability and big it have more than one doctor or in small city the hospital it was smaller its vereyquite and mapy there is one or two.

Example (4.22)

...and small city you haven't interested Because there are not shopping

Example (4.23)

in the big city the prices(missing verb).more than the small city.

As we can see from the above examples, some students failed to use the correct tenses in their essays. They also omitted the use of verbs where necessary. While these were not common errors, they did occur in the students texts. Examples 4.20a, 4.22 and 4.23 were corrected after revision in the experimental group. Example 4.20b from the experimental group and Example 4.23 from the control group remained uncorrected. If I had had the opportunity of running the pilot and doing a pilot analysis, perhaps this item in the self-assessment sheet could have been amended to include a broader category to do with the use of verbs in the writing. This might have captured some of the other issues occurring with verb use in the writing. At the moment, the results are limited to consistent verb-tense use. These are recognised as self-initiated revisions and are discussed later in the chapter.

4.5.2.6 Word Order

Word order was the other aspect in which students from both groups made fewer mistakes before revision as stated in Table 4.16. Wrong word order relates to sentential problems; and its presence affects the unity of the text, as seen in the following examples:

Example (4.24)

Town has air fresh and food natural.

In example (4.24), the student puts the adjective after the noun instead of before. This is transferred from the Arabic system of writing, where adjectives follow nouns. However, this example was corrected after revision using the self-assessment sheet and the sentence was changed to ‘town has fresh air and organic food’. The student here also changed the word ‘natural’ to ‘organic’.

It is evident in Table 4.16 that students made more mistakes in the area of mechanics compared to grammar, according to the analysis of their writing drafts. The more mechanical mistakes students made, the more often they located and corrected them when they used the self-assessment sheet. These results are important, as they touch on metacognitive issues, such as the question of the importance of students becoming aware of the consequences of inaccuracy and the value of correctness in EFL, as well as the ability to develop self-editing skills (Ferris, 1999; Köhlmyr, 2003, as cited in Oscarsson, 2009).

It is important to highlight here that there were other mistakes related to grammar, in addition to the issues around verb use mentioned earlier, such as mistakes in the use of plurals, wrong form, articles, sentence structure and run-on sentences. Table 4.18 shows the number of students in both groups with each mistake, the number of students who corrected these mistakes and provides an example of each criterion. All revisions made to criteria not stated in the self-assessment sheet are considered as self-initiated revisions. The number here refers to number of students who made and corrected these mistakes and not the actual number of mistakes.

Criteria	Exp. group	Cont. group	Example
Plural	2	1	There are many school.
Wrong form	3	0	People are have social life.
Articles	4	0	Life in city is exciting
Sentence structure	4	0	People know each other they are kind.
Pronoun	5	0	I like living in the big city because you can get anything
Run on	6	0	Social life in town is very nice people see each other at any time.

Table 4.18 Self-initiated revision for criteria not mentioned in the self-assessment sheet

Table 4.18 shows that the students in both groups made grammatical mistakes in addition to the ones included in the self-assessment sheet. Some of the students in the experimental group corrected some of the mistakes as presented in Table 4.18. There was also one student in the control group who revised a mistake in her use of plurals. The results show that the self-assessment sheet encourages students to read their drafts again and in the course of doing so, identify other mistakes. The results from the questionnaire showed that more than 80% of the participants think that revising grammar and mechanics is not very difficult. Yet, there were quite a few mistakes in this area which remained uncorrected in the control group. As previously discussed, I was unable to probe this further due to limitations in the design of the study mentioned in 3.2 & again in Chapter 5.

4.6 The students' attitude towards self-assessment

This section reports the results of the post-study feedback form used in the current study. I am reporting results from the use of this form with the full number of students from the experimental group – 70 students. As the feedback form was completed anonymously, it was difficult to link the responses to the top and bottom ten students from the experimental group chosen for analysis, but their responses provide an overview of their attitudes towards self-assessment. The results reported here address the last research question as stated below.

Research Question 3: What are the students' opinions of using the self-assessment technique as a revision strategy for essay writing?

The third research question posed by the study investigates the experimental groups' attitude towards self-assessment. The students' attitude towards self-assessment was traced through a short post-study feedback form which was meant to have been followed up by interview. The post-study feedback form consisted of three items to elicit what the students thought about the process of self-assessment as a technique used to revise their writing. Items 1 and 2 address the students' attitude towards self-assessment in general. Item 3 probes the levels of difficulty when revising the three different sections included in the self-assessment sheet used in the study, i.e. content, organisation, and language.

As I have highlighted through the course of this thesis, there were difficulties in the data collection which meant that this post-study feedback form did not function as fully as I had originally intended it to. I was unable to pilot it and was therefore unable to see if any of these questions required a follow-up, which they do. All this form does is to highlight

superficially their responses to self-assessment. For a detailed response on their attitudes, the form needs to be piloted and follow-up interviews need to be conducted.

The results of the three items are presented and discussed in the following sections followed by the students' comments about this experience.

4.6.1 Item One: I feel that assessing my own writing has made me aware of what I needed to improve on.

Item one of the post-feedback form traces the students' attitudes towards using the self-assessment process in revising their writing. It examines whether self-assessment made students aware of what they specifically needed to improve in their writing. The students' responses are presented in Table 4.19.

1- I feel that assessing my own writing has made me aware of what I need to improve.				
Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
No.	15	41	12	2
%	21%	59%	17%	3%

Table 4.19 Results of item one of the post-study feedback form

Item one shows that of the 70 students that used the self- assessment sheet, 59% agreed that the assessment of their own writing made them aware of what they needed to improve. This positive attitude is also reflected in the students' results in their post- writing, where it was found that their writing showed improvement after using the self-assessment sheet to rewrite their essays. Whilst 20% showed degrees of disagreement, the large majority were positive towards the use of self-assessment and this is supported by the positive revisions to their texts.

4.6.2 Item Two: I think self-assessment is a very difficult technique to carry out.

Item two examines whether self-assessment is a difficult technique to carry out from the students' point of view. The students' responses to this item were as follows.

2- I think self-assessment is a very difficult technique to carry out.				
Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
No.	2	25	40	3
%	3%	36%	57%	4%

Table 4.20 Results of item two of the post-study feedback form

61 % of the students believe that self-assessment is not a difficult procedure to carry out. The remaining 39% of the students, however, consider self-assessment a difficult technique to carry out. A serious limitation of this study as previously stated, is that I did not get the chance to follow up on this response. It would have been beneficial to have been able to interview the students and to find out their reasons for finding the self-assessment process difficult (See 3.2).

It is possible to hypothesise that the difficulty with self-assessment may stem from the fact that students are usually dependent on their teachers in the Libyan system (Elabbar, 2011; Shihiba, 2011; Suwaed, 2011) and that they have not experienced using self-assessment in their classrooms as noted by the participants in the questionnaire study. Boud (1995) and Diab (2010) also highlight that it is vital to train students to apply any type of alternative assessment and given that these students may not have had sufficient training, this exercise might have been difficult for them.

4.6.3 Item Three: Rank the three aspects in terms of which are the easiest to self-assess (from Easy 1. to 3. Difficult:

Item three addresses what students think about the relative difficulty of revising their essays. The students' rankings range between 1, where a particular section is the easiest of the three to self-assess to 3, where it is the most difficult to self-assess. The results of these are presented in Table 4.21.

3- Rank the following in terms of which is the easiest to self-assess (from 1. Easy to 3. Difficult)						
Rank	Content		Organisation		Language	
	N0	%	N0	%	N0	%
1	16	23%	20	29%	38	54%
2	17	24%	30	42%	12	17%
3	37	53%	20	29%	20	29%

Table 4.21 Results of item three of the post-study feedback

Although the content element is ranked as the most difficult, the results of the analysis of the content section seemed to have the most positive effect on the writing. Many students improved the content of their revised draft as seen in the results on the content section

presented in (4.3) especially for introduction and conclusion. It is also interesting to compare this with the questionnaire data where 56% of the respondents felt that revising their ideas was difficult. This is a similar finding.

Regarding the organisation aspect, of the 70 students, 29% ranked that self- assessment of their organisation was the easiest of the three. Given that 90% of the participants in the questionnaire reported that organising was a difficult element in writing, this is a very different result. One possible reason could be that when presented with these three options, they found organisation less difficult than content, whereas for the questionnaire participants, they were ranking several different elements and this might have stood out for them as more difficult than other components.

Results of the students' attitudes towards the language aspect suggest that they find this easy to self-assess. This is reflected in the study of the 40 students' writing where this was the element that received the most positive response from the students. The results also correspond with the questionnaire results where 94% said that this was the easiest to revise.

4.6.4 Students' comments

Although the students' were not asked to provide any comments in the post-study feedback form, some of them expressed their attitudes in short sentences (For all students comments, see Appendix 11).

Most of the participants are of the view that the process of self-assessment helped them to revise their writing. Some of the comments provided, do stand up as evidence that these students had never revised their writing at any stage before handing it in to their teacher. This point was also emphasised by El-Aswad (2002), who indicated that Libyan university students majoring in English are not taught how to revise their writing in Arabic or in English. This was confirmed by the questionnaire study. Some of the other comments showed that the criteria stated in self-assessment sheet helped students to guide their revision.

Most of the comments are positive and in favour of using the self-assessment sheet. Given that the forms were anonymous, may possibly lend these comments greater credibility. This chapter has reported on the influence of the self-assessment sheet on 40 students in the data. 20 of these students were in the experimental group and 20 from the control group. By taking a mixed sample of students with differing abilities, (i.e. the top ten and the bottom ten from each group), a representative sample of their response to revision was achieved. While there

are important and recognisable limitations to the study which may possibly affect the results, it is still heartening as a teacher to note that self-assessment can work in a classroom and help students improve their writing by a considerable extent.

CHAPTER 5

REFLECTIONS ON RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study by evaluating the research in terms of its relative strengths and weaknesses. I start the chapter by summarising the results in section (5.2). In section (5.3), I highlight some of the pedagogical implications of integrating the self-assessment process into the EFL classroom. I then put forward an evaluation of the research and some of the challenges faced throughout the research project (5.4). I also provide some suggestions for the writing classroom (5.5). The chapter concludes with specific recommendations for Libyan EFL writing teachers (5.6) and also includes recommendations for further research to be conducted in the area of self-assessment in EFL teaching (5.7). The chapter ends with concluding remarks (5.8).

5.2 A summary of the results

Bearing in the mind the limitations of the study, there are a few noteworthy results from the present study which hold some value for pedagogical practice. The present study on the effect of using the self-assessment sheet on the quality of the writing of the students has shown that:

- (a) The study revealed that students who used the self-assessment sheet to revise their writing made more revisions to their text than those in the control group who hardly revised at all. This supports Sommers' (1981) finding which indicates that students will revise if they are provided with a set of criteria to implement. Thus, this study supports the notion that revision is not a waste of time, as claimed by Shaughnessy (1977) and Hansen (1978).
- (b) Students in the experimental group who implemented self-assessment in their writing were able to make positive surface and meaning revisions to all three writing aspects listed on the self-assessment sheet: content, organisation and language as discussed in chapter 2 (4.3, 4.4 & 4.5). Students in the control group mostly made more surface revisions than meaning revisions, supporting several previous studies (Stallard, 1974; Perl, 1979; Sze, 2002; Srichanyachon, 2011). Some of the surface revisions did not result in better quality writing. This finding concurs with Oskarsson (1980), Flower

&Hayes (1981) and Oscarson (2009). Moreover, the study supports earlier findings of Von Elek and Oskarsson (1973) in relation to the effectiveness of self-assessment on the part of the EFL learner's language aspect of writing, in particular grammar.

- (c) Most students who implemented self-assessment in their writing showed a positive attitude towards the process. This was reported in 4.6. The implementation of self-assessment made students more aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their writing, thereby enabling teachers to give more attention to areas of weakness when teaching writing in the future.

5.3 Contribution of this thesis to writing research and writing pedagogy

This section discusses the results of the study and explores some of the wider issues in writing research and writing pedagogy. I have based this discussion around the research questions.

This research aims to explore the impact of using a self-assessment sheet on the quality of revised drafts of Libyan EFL students at university level in terms of content, organisation and language. In addition, the opinions of the students about using the self-assessment process are also examined. The study aims to also establish the students' attitudes towards the use of the self-assessment process in EFL writing and whether these attitudes are positive or negative.

As stated in chapter 1, the three research questions were as follows:

RQ 1: Do inexperienced EFL students who self-assess their writing engage in revision more than those who do not self-assess?

RQ 2: Does self-assessment enable inexperienced EFL students to improve the quality of their revised writing?

RQ 3: What are the students' opinions of using the self-assessment technique as a revision strategy for essay writing?

5.3.1 Revision, inexperienced writers and issues of learner autonomy in a classroom

In response to the first research question, results showed that students in the experimental group who used the self-assessment sheet engaged in more revision than students in the control group who did not use the self-assessment sheet. A higher frequency of revision was apparent in all the categories of content, organisation and language. Although students in

both groups share similar English proficiency levels, the effects of using the self-assessment technique and the direct effect it has on the writing of the student in this study, cannot be undervalued. There are instances when revision to the content of the body paragraph and to the overall organisation of the text brought about minimal improvement. Despite the minimal improvement, the fact that there is an element of improvement is significant for the current study and indeed for further studies in the future.

In short, this means there is immense potential for improvement in the writing ability of students who diligently use the self-assessment sheet. The overall scores for the essays as determined by the raters for the experimental group increased after using the self-assessment technique. This is in comparison to the control group where the scores remained the same. This is because the majority of the students in the control group did not revise their essays. The reasons as to why the students in the control group were not revising were not investigated in the current study due to data collection difficulties (see 3.2). However, reasons could be inferred from the questionnaire results which indicated that most Libyan students do not habitually write drafts and also do not attempt any revision of what they have written (see 4.2). They are therefore not able to apply revision to their writing given that they have had no prior instructions, guidance, or lessons related to revision. Another possible explanation could possibly be that the student may have been unable to express the changes he/she would have liked to have made due to limited language proficiency. Hence, the student ‘may know what revision strategies are available to improve the text’ but may ‘lack ... ways to make meaning’ due to insufficient level of ‘linguistic maturity’ with which to express the required changes (Sengupta, 1998, p. 128). This is in agreement with views expressed by cognitivists like Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) who have highlighted that unskilled writers have difficulty in transferring what is in their minds to their text.

There is however some evidence of revision in the category of language by the writers in the control group. This then seems to suggest that inexperienced writers without a self-assessment sheet can also make positive changes to their texts. In terms of writing pedagogy in Libya, the use of the self-assessment sheet is very likely to improve learner autonomy in writing classrooms. There is a close link between self-assessment and learner autonomy. The term ‘learner autonomy’ itself can have varied meanings to different researchers in the field. For some, autonomous learning is seen as the process by which the individual learner takes responsibility for their own learning (Holec, 1987; Pemberton, 1996; Benson, 2001). For Holec, the term refers to “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” and for Dickenson

(1987), it was likewise seen as a mode of learning by which the learner has to take personal responsibility in the learning process. Dickenson (1992) viewed learner autonomy as a form of autonomy where the learner makes decisions regarding their own learning as they develop. In a study by Pemberton (1996, p.2) autonomy was described with a wide range of terms, for example, “self-directed”, “self-access learning”, “self-instruction”, “independent learning” and “autonomous learning”. Of all these researchers’ definitions Little’s (1991) definition is by far, the most apt when we reflect on the results of the study in this thesis. He stated that autonomy was the ability of the student for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action. The self-assessment sheet is one way in which the learner is encouraged to detach themselves from their writing, to reflect on it objectively. This objectivity then encourages the student to make some decisions that lead to the revision of their writing.

An important element in the research relating to autonomy is the role of the teacher. As a teacher in Libya, I am aware of the large class sizes that most English teachers in Libya typically have to deal with. As mentioned in the introduction (see 1.5), teachers tend to teach writing in a manner that is easy for them. The primary emphasis is on grammar and mechanics and this is partly due to the large classes. The questionnaire respondents confirmed this by saying that grammar and mechanics are prioritised in their writing classes. However, when we take on board the results of this study, we are led to reflect on the pedagogic implications of learner autonomy brought about by the use of the self-assessment technique. It is also useful to consider some viewpoints that stem from previous research in this field. Sturtridge (1992) stated that the role of the teacher in an autonomous classroom should be that of facilitation. It should involve helping learners become aware of the responsibility of their learning, their own language proficiency and their individual aims. He also wrote that the teacher could help the student realise the benefits of each activity and could also provide direction and guidance to the student. Thavenius (1999) advocated the idea that the teacher in an autonomous classroom does not merely make their students responsible for their learning, but shares the responsibility with them. This in turn fosters an interdependent relationship between student and teacher within the classroom environment. Moh (1994, p.42) views the student as holding a “seed” of autonomy which the teacher nurtures. Therefore in order to achieve learner autonomy both the teacher and the learner require a shift in perspective to create an interdependent and mutually responsible relationship that encourages learner autonomy.

A writing classroom could possibly serve as an appropriate venue where this mutually interdependent relationship between teacher and student may be achieved. The teacher provides the guidance and encouragement for the student to use the self-assessment technique within a classroom environment to become autonomous, while concurrently providing guidance around the actual use of the self-assessment technique. This then leads to an opportunity to engage in revision, increasing learner autonomy and reducing teacher dependence. The benefits of the self-assessment technique are therefore seen in this study of inexperienced writers.

5.3.2 Inexperienced writers and the type and quality of revisions made

In the second research question, the effects of using the self-assessment on writing quality as well as the differences between the first and second drafts of both the experimental and control group were analysed. The analysis focused on the elements mentioned in the self-assessment sheet i.e. content, organisation and language. The results show that there are some notable differences between the students' first and second drafts when they revised with the help of the self-assessment sheet (i.e. students in the experimental group) in areas of content, organisation and language. For the students in the control group, there were not many changes in the revised drafts.

5.3.2.1 Content

In revising content, students in the experimental group made changes to the three elements included in the content section of the self-assessment sheet, i.e. introduction, body paragraph and conclusion.

In the **introduction**, students improved the introductory paragraph of their revised drafts in all aspects. 86% of students succeeded in writing their introductory paragraph with a clear purpose statement. In addition, the number of students who were able to provide sufficient background information in their introductory paragraph increased from 49% to 86% in the revised drafts. It could be argued that through the use of the self-assessment sheet that the revisions made by the students have improved by them making some important meaning revisions to their writing. This finding correlates with Belcher's (1989, cited in Haoucha, 2005) finding that 'ESL basic writers do make global changes when they revise rather than simply correcting surface errors' (1989, p.1237) and Matsuhashi and Gordon (1985, p. 230-235) who state that 'even inexperienced writers can, during revising, choose to focus their

attention on either low-level mechanical changes or high-level meaning changes'. These studies support the findings of the current study. The majority of studies (previously reviewed in 2.3.3) make the case that experienced writers or skilled writers carry out meaning revisions while inexperienced writers limit themselves to surface revisions which do not surpass sentence level. This study, like Belcher's, and Matsuhashi and Gordon's, stand in contrast to those studies because the writers there have made meaning revisions to their writing with the use of the self-assessment sheet.

The students in the experimental group changed their one-sentence introductions in the original text to a multi-sentenced introductory paragraph. This finding is different from Diab (2011) where her self-editors did not improve their introductions as much as the peer editors did. She claims that self-editors were able to notice more errors but they could not improve their writing in terms of detail. Diab did not offer an explanation for this observation. However, one could possibly hypothesise that this result arose because the writing task in Diab's study consisted of six paragraphs including introduction and conclusion. This could be considered as a lengthy piece of writing and hence may have been challenging for her writers who were self-editing. With peer support, they might have then been able to produce better writing.

While there is evidence of meaning revisions made to the introductions, there is also ample evidence from the data taken from both groups of surface revisions having taken place. These findings agree with a number of previous studies (Bridwell, 1980; Sommers, 1980; Faigly & Witte, 1981; Wall & Petrovsky, 1981; Flower et al., 1986; Hayes & Flower, 1986; Wallace & Hayes, 1991; Galbraith & Torrance, 2004) which concluded that EFL student learners or inexperienced writers focus more on surface revisions than meaning revisions. Some of the studies described above, compared skilled (journalists and academic writers) and unskilled (student writers) writers to determine what sort of revisions each type of writer carries out. This study differs in that it considers the writing of inexperienced students only. The difference noted in these other studies may therefore be more obvious than in this study. What this study does show, is that inexperienced writers can and do make meaning changes to their texts.

In the **Body paragraph**, none of the students in the control group improved the main body paragraph of their work. Also, students in the experimental group did not revise this section as consistently as they did the introduction and conclusion. The reason behind this was not

investigated, as I was not able to conduct any interviews with the writers. The questionnaire results (see Section 4.2) might assist to shed some light as 46% of respondents did indicate that they found revising ideas and writing relevant information as a 'very difficult' task. Mukattash (1983, p.196) also notes that Arab EFL learners typically face two types of problems. The first is that students make continuous errors in grammar and spelling. The second is that students find it difficult to express themselves 'comfortably and efficiently' when dealing with 'academic topics' or 'common everyday topics'. This may stem from the difficulties encountered throughout their writing processes, such as the need to focus on 'synchronisation' between the form of the target language and text structure as well as spelling and vocabulary (Grabe and Kaplan 1996). For the most part, L2 learners focus on micro-errors of L2 (grammar and structure) rather than macro-errors (content). With this in mind, it could be argued that writing of the body paragraph may be deemed more difficult than writing the introduction or conclusion and therefore resulting in fewer revisions in the body paragraph.

A further point to note which is related to pedagogy is raised by Kharma and Hajjaj (1989, p.187) who state that

‘.....in teaching writing, ‘Arab EFL’ teachers keep in mind an order of priority to which they implicitly adhere. This order reflects those teachers' interest in teaching first things first in order of importance. The following are normally the areas that dominate the teachers' thinking in both teaching and correcting students' written work: the mechanics of writing, handwriting, spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation; grammatical mistakes and topic development’.

The reluctance shown by some students to revise their ideas may be linked to the fact that they may not view revision as priority given all the other aspects of writing which they paid attention to. In fact, it would probably be a good idea for writing classrooms in Libya to take note of Zamel's (1983) points where she states that issues of content and meaning should be concentrated on first and that language should be addressed once the ideas to be communicated have been defined. Zamel however, does acknowledge the value of looking at errors in first drafts.

The data shows that revisions to the body paragraphs are fewer than content revisions to the introduction and conclusion. There is also evidence from the data which demonstrates that 7 students from the experimental group revised their body paragraph. The analysis of the

students' writing shows that the application of the self-assessment process on the body paragraph resulted in fewer revisions than in the introductory paragraph. However, students were able to improve their body paragraphs by adding new ideas, facts and examples. This finding agrees with Diab's (2011) general findings where she (2011, p. 283) concludes that 71.42 % of self-editors were able to make improvements to their supporting details.

For **the conclusion** section, it was found that, some students in both groups were unable to write a clear conclusion before revision. However, after revision, the results suggest that those who carried out self-assessment revised their conclusion more than those in the control group who did not use the self-assessment sheet. The students in the experimental group tried to improve their conclusion with the addition or substitution of words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs. What was noticeable was that the majority of additions to the conclusion were a sentence or a full paragraph. This could indicate that the self-assessment sheet was successful in encouraging the students to revise and improve their conclusions. It could also indicate that the students are capable of making these revisions if they are motivated to do so.

5.3.2.2 Organisation

The results of the study demonstrate the positive effect of using a self-assessment sheet on the organisation of the students' writing, although this was less evident than it was in the content section. The majority of students were able to make effective alterations to the structure of their essay through a number of organisational revisions. Students added or combined paragraphs, or split paragraphs into two, so that each could be discussed as a separate idea.

In addition, a few students displayed an ability to make effective changes that improved the cohesion of their writing. For the purposes of this study, I considered the cohesion of writing at a very basic level that of the student's ability to employ the use of transition words. This limitation was largely due to the proficiency level of the students. The results showed that students in the experimental group had a tendency to revise transitions between paragraphs of the essay as opposed to transitions between sentences. This was partly due to the fact that the self-assessment sheet did not specify that they consider transitions at sentence level. On the other hand, apart from one student, students in the control group did not make any revision to transitions.

Overall, the results for organisation of the writing were mixed. Not many students were able to fully reflect on their first drafts and make changes to improve the quality of the organisation of their texts. This could be due to the organisational principles that govern the English language and those that govern the Arabic language. Structure, grammar and the organisation of writing, differ greatly between both these languages (Santos & Suleiman, 1993, p.55). The questionnaire respondents also indicated that Arabic composition is different from English writing and that these differences can pose a barrier to successful essay writing in English (Chan, 2010, p.12). It is therefore probably useful to introduce the use of the self-assessment sheets as a way to direct the students' attention to aspects of text organisation which could lead to an improvement to their writing.

5.3.2.3 Language

The analysis demonstrated that the areas of mechanics and grammar, i.e. spelling, punctuation and capitalisation, were particularly challenging for students. What is important to note, is that the more spelling and grammar mistakes students made, the more often they located and corrected them. The self-assessment sheet helped students to correct most mistakes concerning language and grammar. Nearly half of the students revised and corrected all their language mistakes. It became clear that mechanics and grammar were the easiest aspects to revise and that this may be due to two factors. Firstly, EFL teachers, including Libyan teachers tended to concentrate on teaching grammar even in writing classes and secondly, teachers tend to correct students' mistakes in areas such as spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, subject-verb agreement, consistent verb tense and word order, more than the areas of content and organisation (see 4.2.4). Most EFL teachers focused primarily on grammar. In Furneaux et al. (2007, p. 69), they investigated 110 EFL teachers from five different countries to see what the focus of EFL teachers was when they provided feedback to students on their writing. Furneaux et al. concluded that teachers 'overwhelmingly focused on grammar' (p.69).

Aspects of grammar, spelling and punctuation seem to be the areas of language to which the students seem to pay special attention to. This may be due to the fact that most of the teaching concentrates mostly on the rules of grammar in EFL classes, as stated by Truscott (1996) and Ferris (1999), and all the more so in Libya, as stated by Elabbar (2011).

Correcting language mistakes, as stated by Wei & Chen (2003), is a common element in self-assessment. However, the findings of this study are somewhat different to that of Wei &

Chen (2003). In their study, correcting language mistakes appeared to be the toughest job for the students as “their eyes were not sensitive to their own mistakes”. Likewise, Srichanyachon’s (2011) comparative study of three revision methods: teacher-, peer- and self-revision, indicates that EFL learners are not able to notice their grammar and language mistakes, even those mistakes that should be easy to identify. He attributes this to the low proficiency and weak grammatical knowledge of the students.

In the results of this study, a high percentage of students in the experimental group were able to make corrections to their language mistakes through the use of the self-assessment sheet in comparison to those in the control group (see 4.5). It has also been noted that the number of language mistakes students made in their writing was fairly substantial, particularly in terms of spelling and punctuation, and the study has revealed that most students were able to correct these mistakes. It is my view that some of the students made mistakes in the first draft because they may not have been concentrating on spelling and other mechanics in the initial writing stage. Their main goal was probably to produce a piece of writing, a considerable effort for inexperienced writers in itself, and to complete it on time.

As a teacher from Libya and having spoken to other Libyan teachers, it was surprising to me to find that there were students who were able to independently make changes to their writing. This is particularly surprising as the English writing proficiency level of most students in Libya, as stated by Orafi and Borg (2009) and Rajendran, (2010) (see Sections 1.5 & 1.6) is not high.

Research (as reviewed in Chapter 2, particularly Table 2.2) suggests that inexperienced writers typically do not make any revisions in comparison to experienced writers. In this study, we have evidence of inexperienced writers making changes. Most of the revisions made are as a result of using the self-assessment sheet. This corroborates what Sommers (1980), Hayes and Flower (1986), Hayes (1996) and Wallace et al (1996) state that students usually do not spontaneously revise at an optimal level and that they require explicit instruction. However, there is also evidence from inexperienced writers (those in the control group) who did not have a guide for revision, but who have gone on to make apt changes to their text. This could imply that inexperienced writers are not a homogenous group in terms of their approaches to writing. They can differ, and any comparisons with experienced writers need to take this into account.

5.3.2.4 Students' attitudes towards the self-assessment technique

Finally, to answer the last research question regarding the opinion of the students to the self-assessment sheet, a short feedback form was given to students in the experimental group to elicit their views.

The finding of this study showed that the technique of self-assessment was received positively by the students involved in the study. Implementing the self-assessment process within EFL learning gave students the ability to re-assess their own writing which in turn encouraged them to improve their writing skills. It also provided the students with time to reflect on their writing and to gain an awareness of when and where in a piece of text, improvements were required. As the writing process becomes clearer to the student during this period of reflection; they begin to understand the linguistic elements they were previously taught in the classroom and in all likelihood, make a genuine attempt to apply them.

Therefore, involving students in a classroom-based assessment using rubrics on writing, as suggested by Thome (2001), can help students to assess their own writing skills more accurately. The literature suggests that there is a correlation between how well learners are able to monitor their own proficiency and how effectively they have been instructed by their teachers (Venkatatesh, 2003). Providing instruction in evaluation criteria, emphasising content / organisation, mechanics and usage' (Marteski, 1998), is favourable in comparison to the development of the students' ability to self-assess (Mojica, 2010).

In general, the post-study feedback shows that the students of the experimental group who used the self-assessment technique to revise their writing have favourable attitudes towards the application of self-assessment to their writing. This is a similar finding to that reported in previous research studies conducted in other EFL contexts on the learners' attitudes towards self-assessment including studies conducted by Von Elek and Oskarsson (1973), Donetta (2003) Wang (2007) and Oscarson (2009).

The results obtained from the analysis of the feedback form indicated that self-assessment sheet made students aware of what they needed to improve on. This helps the student to have positive attitudes towards the application of the self-assessment technique

On the wider issue of writing pedagogy and the inclusion of self-assessment, Oscarson's results (2009) indicate that students and teachers were positive about the incorporation of

self-assessment activities in the EFL writing classroom. They regarded self-assessment as an important skill that underpins lifelong learning and contributes valuable additional information to more traditional modes of assessment.

In Oscarson's (2009) study the majority of students viewed the self-assessment method as a wholly positive practice. They tended to view the use of the self-assessment sheet as a way in which to take responsibility for their own development. Andrade and Du (2007) also looked at the attitudes that students have toward self-assessment, and found that students reported positive attitudes toward self-assessment after extended practice. They also pointed out the need for clearer criteria, the continued use of self-assessment governed revision to improve the quality of their work and their grades. The same finding was reported in Wang's study (2007, p.313) who concluded that '.... and self-assessment is welcomed by the majority of learners and plays a relatively positive role in the whole ESL writing'. The point to note here is that students are keen for clear criteria in order for the experience of using self-assessment to be positive.

More broadly, what I did notice at a more individual level is that students in the experimental group who had been given the same instructions and the same training, revised differently from one another indicating individual learning differences. It is well established fact that students learn at differing speeds dependant on their conceptual abilities (Ellis, 1994; Stenhouse, 1979, cited in Diab, 2008) and this is apparent in their ability to revise their work. Di Pardo and Freedman (1988) wrote with reference to Vygotsky (1978, p. 129) that 'two students may display a similar degree of completed mental development, but their "developmental dynamics" may be quite different, allowing one to go much further than the other when both are given equal help.'

5.4 Evaluation of research

The evaluation of the research is divided into strengths of the study (5.2.1) and limitations of the study (5.2.2).

5.4.1 Strengths of the research

Previous research on self-assessment has had the tendency to focus on aspects of EFL writing which could be quantified, such as grammar and mechanics (e.g. Oscarson, 2009; Kasule & Lunga, 2010; Diab, 2010). The studies which focused on other aspects such as content and

organisation approached these quantitatively and rarely considered the student's written texts (Aly, 2005; Khodadady & Khodabakhshzade, 2012). Other than Diab (2008), there are no other studies which have focused on self-assessment and revision qualitatively. This study extends the work done by Diab (2008) by considering a larger number of students and uses an analytical model to categorise, quantify and evaluate the revisions.

I have also closely considered the self-assessment process from the students' perspective rather than the teachers' (Dalala, 2014). This is a further contribution to the research in this area.

The other strength of this research lies in its attempt here to look closely at an educational context which has not received much research attention. Due to political and other constraints over the last two decades, researchers have found it increasingly difficult to get access to educational institutions in Libya to conduct research. While there were challenges in this study and repercussions for the results, I was still able to collect data and analyse them.

Another strength of this study lies in its findings which were based on a questionnaire of Libyans who live in the UK. The questionnaire results provided a view of the experiences of these Libyans about the teaching and learning of EFL writing in Libya. Due to the minimal number of studies conducted on the teaching of writing in Libya, most of the questionnaire findings have not been reported in any other studies of the same context. Therefore, these results can be used to compare and contrast other research. In addition, other student researchers who investigate EFL writing and revision in the same context may find these findings useful.

Although true assessment of the teaching of writing may only be made through classroom observation, questionnaire results could be generalised to a certain degree in so far that the participants, although coming from different parts of Libya share similar experiences of the teaching of writing. These students had also studied in different universities at different times on the time-line within which this study was conducted.

5.4.2 Limitations of the study

There are some important limitations that need to be taken into account as these have implications for further research. Prior to summarising the results of this study in Section 5.3,

the next section will begin with a reflection on the limitations of this study in terms of how the data was gathered and how it was analysed.

5.4.2.1 Data

In this section, I discuss the two issues which concern the quantity and quality of the data obtained.

(a) Quantity of data obtained

As detailed in Chapter 3, collecting the data proved more difficult than expected. While I had received support from universities to conduct the research in principal, when I arrived in Libya to undertake the data collection, a number of issues arose and these had to be overcome within a short period of time. These are detailed in Chapter 3 of the thesis (see 3.2). The period of data collection coincided quite unfortunately with the most intense period of civil unrest in the country. I was able to collect data only from one institution and was unable to fully carry out the plans that I initially intended. I managed to leave Libya just before the main airport was destroyed in the war.

(b) Quality of data obtained

The participants of the study were all Libyan EFL students with a fairly low proficiency of English. Their low proficiency level meant that it was sometimes very difficult to understand their writing and to analyse it. However, I was determined to examine the students writing in this context in order to make the study beneficial for pedagogical purposes in this under-researched educational context.

To manage this, I gave students as much information as I could in terms of what I was expecting with their writing. I had discussed possible topics with the teachers and found that the best approach was to give them a familiar topic and ask them to write at least 3 paragraphs. This meant that despite their low proficiency, the majority of them were able to produce writing that I could analyse.

5.4.2.2 Methodology: piloting research tools

A pilot study is defined as the pre-testing or ‘trying out’ of a particular research instrument (Baker 1994, p.182-3). One of the advantages of conducting a pilot study is that it might provide an indication of the areas of research which might need further review and attention. For example, it could possibly highlight areas where research protocols may or may not be

followed. It could also lead to some degree of understanding as to whether the proposed methods or instruments are inappropriate, or indeed, too complicated. De Vaus (1993, p. 54) said ‘Do not take the risk. Pilot test first.’

When I was planning the research, I had every intention to pilot the research instruments and data collection procedures. However, in the current study, the research tools were not piloted for many reasons (discussed in 3.2) except for the questionnaire. Not piloting the research tools led to several complications and difficulties, particularly in terms of interpreting the results. These are discussed in detail in Chapter 3. The most significant limitation was the difficulty in getting access to the students. As a result, I was unable to conduct a pre-study questionnaire to secure some demographic information about them. My reflections on their background are therefore limited to my assumptions about a typical Libyan student and not the actual participants of the study. I have tried to manage this aspect by tailoring the questionnaire to confirm my observations about the Libyan system of education and the likely educational background of the students.

Admittedly, these are serious drawbacks, but I did the best I could with the data that I had to hand in what could only be described as an unfortunate and unexpected turn of events. Future researchers who intend using research from countries which are politically unstable need to be mindful that the process of data collection could be severely hampered at the most inopportune time.

5.4.3 The challenge of arriving at a useful overall approach

The present study investigates the effects, of using the process of self-assessment on the quality of students’ revised drafts in two different areas, i.e. self-assessment and revision. It therefore needed multiple approaches to analyse the data. The majority of studies investigating self-assessment in writing have tended to use descriptive statistics, inferential tests, multifaceted Rasch Measurement and ANOVA for data analysis (Matsuno, 2009; Diab, 2010; Khodabakhshzade, 2012; Larsari, 2012). Despite the popularity of these forms of analysis in similar studies, I chose not to apply such statistical tests (except for students’ writing scores) in the present study as I was investigating changes in language which could not all be quantified, but needed a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Revision is often considered the simplest element of any composition to study, as there is a written record of alterations made. In practice, the study of revision is complex, and

past studies have attempted to understand this complexity in a twofold way: by exploring the effects of revision on a composition and attempting to understand the cause of the revision made.

The concept of measurement is also vital in studies that focus on the topic of revision and many, for example, Faigley and Witte (1981) and Beach and Eaton (1984) focus on as many quantifiable components within the text as possible. Quantifiable elements are interpreted as additions, deletions and substitutions in the text. In this study I used a similar approach. However, I combined this with an attempt to investigate the language level (Bridwell, 1980) at which these changes took place; whether these were at word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph level. In all the cases, it was necessary to study each revision in more detail and in the contexts that they had been produced. To ensure that the discussion of the results reflected this, I chose not to employ statistical tests used in most self-assessment studies. I focused instead on the type of revisions made, and the effect the quality of these changes had on the overall quality of the writing. To achieve this type of analysis, I studied the different methods that would facilitate such an investigative process. I selected and modified Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy and Bridwell's (1984) scheme for analysing revision. The rationale behind this choice is discussed in detail in section 3.8. This generated a large amount of revision data, but not all could be accommodated within this thesis. I have tried, as far as possible, to provide typical examples of revisions from the data and more examples have been provided in the appendices.

5.4.4 Suggestions for replicating the study

Having been unable to conduct a pilot study for the current study, I would have undertaken the following procedures if I were to carry out the study again. The following suggestions are also useful for any researcher who needs to replicate the present study.

- 1- Piloting research tools. If piloting is impossible to conduct in the researcher's chosen setting, then the researcher might need to pilot in a different context or use a different student sample. For example, conducting the study with UK based Arabic- speaking students (e.g. pre-sessional students).
- 2- Using a pre-study questionnaire with the participants to gain information about their background before conducting the study. This would be useful in interpreting the

results of the questionnaire and would also help in reducing the assumptions made about the data.

- 3- In the case of self-assessment research, as much time as possible needs to be factored in for training in the use of the self-assessment sheet. A researcher should consider providing direct, explicit, and step-by-step training in the use of the self-assessment exercises beforehand and include practice time prior to implementation (Andrade &Valtcheva, 2009; Harris et al, 2008; Mowl& Pain, 1995; Oldfield &Macalpine, 1995). By doing so, students would be more comfortable with the methods and more likely to implement them effectively with a clear understanding of how to use the self-assessment sheet. The researcher should also provide considerable time for systematic training and practice, especially prior to the first self-assessment lesson.
- 4- Students should be provided sufficient independent time and space to complete self-assessment exercises, with most of the work taking place in the classroom (Belanoff, 2001; Graziano-King, 2007; Warkartin et al, 1995). Working in class with the self-assessment sheet will enable the researcher to offer support and corrective feedback (Warkartin et al), if necessary. There should be sufficient time during class for the students to assess their writing and to complete their revision. This procedure helps to measure the effectiveness of the self-assessment technique as students are not likely to use other sources to help them with their writing.
- 5- Consider conducting interviews with the participants and teachers involved in the study. Interviews may lead to a better understanding of the participants' thoughts, feelings and opinions towards the self-assessment technique.
- 6- Consider comparing self-assessment with other kinds of assessment such as teacher or peer assessment. This may provide the researcher with more insightful results and explore how effective the self-assessment technique is in comparison to other techniques.

5.5 Pedagogical suggestions for the writing classroom

The present study demonstrates that self-assessment has a positive effect on the quality of students' writing in general. However, it is important to note that the teacher has a crucial role to play on how successfully, the self-assessment technique can be utilised as a method of revision. Therefore, in order to ensure that the students benefit fully from using the self-assessment technique, the following are some recommendations on how it may be implemented based on research (Yancey, 1998; Andrade &Boulay, 2003; Sandmann, 2006).

1) Explain the benefits of self-assessment for learning purposes

Self-assessment can be used for both evaluative and learning purposes. The use of self-assessment for evaluative purposes entails the production of quantitative data to generate scores measuring the learner's performance and ability. The use of self-assessment for learning purposes, on the other hand, means that learners employ it to revise their learning progress or as a consciousness-raising technique in order to see and become aware of their mistakes. This study focused on the use of self-assessment for learning purposes rather than evaluative purposes. This meant that students revised their work and in the process became aware of the issues they faced in their writing. Its strength as a learning tool is illustrated by Eaton and Beach (1984), whose work (in L1 context) showed that through the use of self-assessment the subjects that made up the test group were more able to make reasoned revisions to areas previously defined by the participants as challenging. These specific areas were not identified within the study; however, the conclusion was that implementing self-assessment allows students to be critical of their own work and be able to revise their first attempts. The format of the self-assessment in Eaton and Beach's study were questions such as, 'what did you like about your paragraph?' as opposed to rubrics or lists. As this type of question is open ended, it resulted in a variety of different responses that are difficult to score, this in turn suggests that using it for learning and not a means of evaluation is more appropriate. The current study has furthered our understanding of self-assessment by using a self-assessment sheet for students to learn more about their writing and to revise their writing based on the sheet and to assess their writing by attaching a score to each criteria. In this way, the study advances Oskarsson's (1980) view that self-assessment can be used for both evaluative and learning purposes.

Further, in order for students to understand how to fully benefit from the self-assessment technique as a form of revision method, it would be helpful if teachers explained the advantages of the technique. In doing so, the teacher will help to make the student familiar with the method, thereby reducing the scepticism about a new technique which the student might have. The teacher could also encourage students to self-assess in order to show how it will assist them in engaging in critical reading and writing, which in turn could help them to internalise the characteristics of good writing. Eaton and Beech (1984) demonstrated that self-assessment need not necessarily always take the form of rubrics and lists when used for

learning purposes. In their study, they asked students questions like ‘what did you like about your paragraph?’ and similar open-ended questions which created a dialogue around reflecting on writing.

2) Training the students to use learning strategies

The process of self-assessment can be quite challenging for students. In order for it to be implemented successfully, it is proposed that students receive prior training in the use of such a learning approach (Boud, 2007). This preparation would assist the student in negotiating meaning and exploring linguistic form with the teacher’s involvement. In supporting this view, Little (2007, p.20) indicates that ‘learners cannot construct their knowledge out of nothing; neither can they know by instinct how to conduct focused and purposeful learning conversations that shape themselves to the ways of thinking characteristic of the subject in question. Teachers remain indispensable, both as pedagogues and as discipline experts’.

3) Giving motivating feedback

Taking into consideration the EFL classroom environment, it is important to appreciate the value of motivational grading. It is possible that by allocating a high percentage of the course grade to the activity of self-assessment, the students may respond more favourably. If this is the case, it is recommended that the teacher implements this grading by marking the self-assessment sheet, giving credit to the student assessors who provide clear and content-specific feedback. With motivation to engage in self-assessment, students may be more engaged in the task, thereby lending to benefits for both students and teachers.

4) Teacher–student discussion

The assessment of the EFL students’ writing should as far as possible be made throughout the writing process and ought to be a topic of discussion between students and teachers. Assessment which is positive, helpful and rational and includes the students in decision-making is helpful. Assessment then becomes the responsibility of both the student and the teacher to improve learning. Of course, this cannot become an immediate practice; rather, it needs to be developed.

As discussed by Sadler (1989) and Stefani (1998) it is advantageous for both the student and the teacher to comprehend and share involvement in how these criteria are understood through the students’ writing. This type of dialogue between students and teachers will assist

students in understanding the particular linguistic criteria that they would be marked on and also give them an understanding of what exactly they are expected to do. Teachers have a significant role in making self-assessment more beneficial, as every self-assessment of a particular task should enable the teacher to focus on being involved in the teaching of writing. This technique helps students to know what is required to improve their writing; and teachers to refine their focus when they teach writing. A student must understand the level of outcome expected of them. If the student does not have a projected standard then it is more likely that they will lack motivation and become disconnected from the task (Giota, 2002). It is mostly the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that the student has a good understanding of what is expected of them and to assist them in developing their ability to write with fluency and coherence through classroom discussion.

Students have the ability to progress in terms of skill and achievements through the use of the self-assessment technique in the classroom environment. If this is reinforced by deeper comprehension of the marking criteria and through discussion with teachers and fellow students, then the students' fluency as well as understanding, could improve significantly. This comprehension of their own learning produces students who are more successful in language learning throughout their lives. Cram (1995, p. 276) directs attention to the nature of self-assessment itself, highlighting its relevance to student autonomy in the long run.

If the above recommendations are taken into account when incorporating self-assessment in the EFL writing classroom, then it is likely that a positive and beneficial interaction amongst students may become apparent, increasing the knowledge gained and consequently constructing a pathway to autonomous learning.

The guidelines themselves, of course, have some practical implications. To ensure the optimum level of success, teachers themselves may require specific training on how to teach and to implement the self-assessment technique.

Suggestions for this training would include ensuring teachers have a comprehensive understanding of the rationale behind self-assessment in a theoretical framework, which can help overcome any scepticism that teachers may harbour regarding the self-assessment process. The next stage would involve demonstrating how to prepare an assessment sheet to complement the elements of the writing assignments that they are currently teaching. This is an important point, as different essay types will require different constituents and without

matching the assessment sheet to the requirements of the essay, the student will struggle to locate the relevant information. In addition, teachers ought to be trained in the preparation of rubrics for grading self-assessment sheets and essays to ensure that the grading system is easily understandable. This would be beneficial in boosting the confidence the student has with the grades that the teacher allocates. The dialogue between teachers and students around these rubrics will allow students to develop an awareness of how exactly their work would be assessed.

In the next section, I will look at various recommendations that could specifically be of use in the context of the Libyan writing classroom.

5.6 Recommendations for Libyan EFL writing teachers

This section begins by first considering some of the general challenges EFL students face with writing to situate this final section on recommendations for teachers in a specific context within the field of writing pedagogy.

Writing is a multifaceted discipline: Sadler (1989, p. 123-125) describes how the complexity arises as many qualities combine to determine a student's ability. There is no linear way of learning a language and students develop in many dimensions simultaneously. The linguistic skills involved cannot be systematically taught and ticked off a list as 'prerequisite learning cannot be conceptualized as neatly packaged units of skills or knowledge'. In order to write an essay, a student has to create and combine ideas, utilise knowledge of structure and vocabulary, and employ many other skills to formulate a complete piece of writing. This can be challenging even in one's first language and even more so in a second language (Nunan, 1991). The way ideas are expressed through writing requires a decision-making process for the writer; they must first choose their idea, and subsequently decide how to convey it through words. This is undoubtedly a greatly more demanding process for a second language writer. Cumming (2001) remarks that when organising ideas into a piece of writing, second language writers 'seem to devote much attention while they write to decisions about the form of the second language or to finding resources such as appropriate words'.

Weigle (2002, p.36) notes that this challenge can be such that the content and organisation of many EFL and ESL writers' work will suffer whilst the writer struggles with the language itself and that the very nature of the effort involved can affect the outcome of the writing. A study by Roca de Larios, Manchón and Murphy (2006, p.102-110) highlights the conflicting

viewpoints regarding first and second languages. They state that the belief that ‘L2 constrains the formulation of ideas may be regarded as a sweeping generalization’. However, despite this viewpoint the study acknowledged that it did take second language students two times longer to formulate ideas in their L2 writing than in their L1 work and that the time taken was not effected by language proficiency.

The importance of writing as a tool in the learning of a new language stems from the fact that rigorous knowledge is required to convey oneself accurately. Linnarud (1986, p.120) indicates that ‘writing is an important integrative and creative task which should have a prominent place in language teaching and testing’. One issue with learning to write in a second language regards the students’ grasp of the more formal elements of the language in question. It is extremely difficult for an EFL/ESL student to deliver a piece of writing of the same level as a native speaker of that language of similar age and position. Linnarud (1986) studied a group of Swedish students and discovered that, on the whole, their essays in English tended to include more repetition, were shorter and used more limited vocabulary than first language speakers of the same age. The study also notes that the approach of the native speakers to the topic tended to be more original in thought. Linnarud (1986), therefore, argues that it would not be reasonable to only focus on the accuracy of the writing when judging the ability of second language students and that both the method and content should be considered when judging success.

A writing test can be judged valid if it produces a complete piece of writing. There are many different aspects at play both for the writer, as they have a unique way of understanding a task, and the judge, with their unique way of rating or marking. These many variables interact to affect the outcome of the learners’ work pre-and post-assessment, and how the work is rated is therefore influenced by many factors. Self-assessment has been suggested as a way to improve and rate work, as supported by Schendel and O’Neill (1999, p. 205) and as demonstrated by this study. It inspires the student to take responsibility and develop their own awareness of their writing. Self-assessment encourages ‘a certain amount of rhetorical agency’ and is a more beneficial way to learn. A student’s self-assessment can be undertaken as an analysis or as a personal achievement test. Through the implementation of self-assessment a student is able to recognise their own abilities, identify weak areas and develop a full understanding of where improvements are required, whilst also being able to judge which standard their work may have reached (Oscarsson, 2009).

The implementation of self-assessment in an EFL context, where writers have general difficulties around writing (highlighted briefly above), is complex. This study is an attempt to provide EFL learners in Libya with a technique that helps them to improve their writing. As previously discussed, the majority of Libyan EFL students exhibit a low level of English language proficiency for various reasons (discussed in 1.6) (Daoud 1998, p. 391). The results of this study could offer Libyan writing teachers, insight into the effectiveness of criteria-based self-assessment as a form of revision technique. Specifically, in a Libyan classroom, it is useful to bear in mind the following points:

- 1- Given that self-assessment is likely to be a new concept for Libyan students, supporting and training them for the task should be a priority when implementing self-assessment. This would help greatly by turning theoretical views on the positive effects of self-assessment into practical outcomes that enhance writing ability.
- 2- Allowing sufficient time is important for successful self-assessment. Hollins (2006, p.11) states ‘don’t feel you have to rush into using these techniques in every class or during every session. Begin slowly in order to avoid the only real danger in classroom assessment – too much data and not enough time or experience to know what to do with it. Self-assessment therefore, should also be guided, as it is useful not only for improving the writing of the student but also for promoting learner autonomy in the long run (Wie& Chen 2003).
- 3- Given that the focus in a traditional Libyan classroom is on the linguistic elements of spelling and grammar, it is important on the part of the teachers to shift this focus and to place equal importance to all language categorisations. This would involve engaging in a dialogue with the students to enable them to have a better understanding of all categories, for example, content and organisation. The student must first understand why they need to develop these skills in order for them to evaluate whether they have developed the ability to control them.
- 4- In a teacher-centred Libyan classroom, it might also be useful to allow students to discuss and discover their own criteria, recommendations and suggestions for the formulation of the self-assessment sheet. This would encourage them to understand criteria and be more aware of the skills that they need to develop.
- 5- The use of the self-assessment technique in EFL learning can fortify a long term propensity for the learning of language effectively. The inclusion of this assessment method in the classroom can also result in numerous benefits for students as well as

providing a more accurate means of assessment. The most advantageous effects can be achieved if this method is taught from an early age and is constantly used as a means of assessment. Taras (2001; 2003) encourages this initiative in combination with a cumulative assessment format to achieve the best results.

Through this study, it has been demonstrated to some extent that the use of self-assessment is a useful tool for EFL learners to increase their participation in their learning through assessing their own writing performance. This has the possibility of leading to learner autonomy (discussed earlier in section 5.4.1), a valued concept in EFL pedagogy. The findings of the present study support related research and add to the ever growing body of research arising in this field. The students who took part in this study were open to embracing this new method and showed a willingness to reflect on their writing and engage in self-assessment to improve their learning.

In conclusion, the findings of the present study demonstrate the potential effectiveness of self-assessment in improving the quality of the students' revised writings. These findings I hope, will offer encouragement to teachers to implement this technique in their EFL writing classrooms in general and also in the Libyan EFL writing classrooms.

5.7 Further research

This study hopes to contribute to research in the field of EFL writing through investigating the effects of the self-assessment technique on the English writing of Libyan students. In this respect, further research is needed to investigate more thoroughly the areas discussed below.

Given the limitations in methodology in this study, a repeat of this study taking into account the limitations would be valuable. Collecting demographic information, piloting the research instruments and being able to follow up the use of the self-assessment technique through interviews would provide justification for some of the observations in this study.

The present study utilised self-assessment mainly for learning purposes. Further research is required to investigate the use of the self-assessment technique for purely evaluative purposes to examine the validity of this technique when employed by EFL learners for assessment. Moreover, this study examined the effects of self-assessment on writing skills only in the Libyan context. More research is needed on the effect of this technique on other language

acquisition skills in the same context, i.e. in reading, speaking and listening. This can be done, through the ‘ability statement technique’ (Oskarsson, 1984).

It would also be interesting to examine the use of self-assessment on student learning over a period of time. Given that learners are likely to become more aware of their language use over time, it would be valuable to investigate if sustained use of a self-assessment technique in a language classroom would impact the overall proficiency of the learners.

5.8 Concluding remarks and reflections

Early studies related to the practice of revision suggested that skilled writers had a tendency to revise more extensively than less skilled writers (Beach, 1976; Sommers, 1980; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Faigley & Witte, 1981; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). Whilst undertaking the process of revision, the more skilled writers tended to set different goals than their less skilled counterparts. They also tended to adopt different strategies and evaluated their success against a different set of criteria. Consequently, research tends to suggest that the learners’ attention patterns and problem solving approaches differ depending on their level of skill and consequently, influences the complexity of the tasks that they set out to achieve during the writing process (e.g., Cumming, 1998; Raimes, 1985).

The cognitive models (Flower & Hayes, 1981 and Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987) discussed in Chapter 2 both present writing as a problem solving exercise. The writer is said to view the writing process as a series of interconnected problems related to producing, ordering ideas and creating complex plans to which he or she must find solutions. The writer is put in a position of having to review and evaluate his/her plan numerous times throughout the writing process. For the more skilled writers, this process is extended further as they must also consider the appropriateness of the text’s content and form in order to meet the expectation of the intended audience. With these many considerations, as Flower and Hayes (1981) pointed out in their model, writing cannot begin and end with one draft (see 2.3 for more information about benefits of drafting) and as result, it must be seen as a process. This thesis has demonstrated that this idea is likely to be valuable to teachers who could demonstrate the benefits of viewing writing as a process. By engaging writers in revision, they could emphasise how it might lead to better writing and language competence (see Section 5.5. for more detail on pedagogic considerations).

The present study was embarked upon in an attempt to further extend the area of research that demonstrates the positive effect of implementing the process of self-assessment on English Language learners in the Libyan classroom context. It has gone some way in demonstrating that the learner can indeed be encouraged to review one's writing through utilising the process of self-assessment as a form of reflective exercise. Incorporating self- assessment encourages revision and reinforces the constructive practice of writing in a series of steps (Bloom, 1997; Graziano-King, 2007; Warne, 2008; Salimi et al., 2014; Purwanti, 2015). In revising, the writer reconsiders what was written and assesses the possibility for change for the purpose of improvement. This is in keeping with the cognitive models where the emphasis is on reviewing what has been written. It has been shown previously that students who make revisions using the self-assessment process, improve the quality of their written work (Honsa, 2013; Javaherbakhsh, 2010; Khodadady & Khodabakhshzade, 2012; Lam 2013; Purwanti, 2015; Salimi et al., 2014).

Author	Benefit of self-assessment
Honsa (2013)	Self-assessment improves students' writing ability.
Javaherbakhsh (2010)	Self-assessment helps students by enabling them to self-monitor their own learning process which encourages them to develop knowledge through conscious control over that knowledge or to develop metacognitive awareness of knowledge and thought. Using self-assessment also gives the teacher complete information about the students' progress and their failure in the process of learning.
Khodadady & Khodabakhshzade (2012)	Self-assessment enhances students' writing ability as well as their autonomy in writing.
Lam (2013)	Encourages students to become 'active agents in the process of text construction, it can also equip them with key metacognitive writing strategies in reflecting, critiquing, and redrafting their own written work in a

	proactive manner' (p.457).
Purwanti (2015)	Self-assessment helps unskilled writers to reflect on one's own learning. It also helps students to revise the essays at phrase level, surface level, content level, and lexical level.
Salimi et al. (2014)	Self-assessment empowers students' learning of English writing, hence emphasising the formative potential of self-assessment in EFL classes. It helps students to become autonomous learners and provide techniques for their own learning.

Table 5.1 Benefits of self-assessment as found by some studies in an EFL context

This study supports previous studies that have attempted to prove that self-assessment provides a strong framework by which to make revisions as part of the writing process. As discussed in Section 2.2, self-assessment fulfils the 'monitor' function in the Flower & Hayes model and helps the writers move from knowledge-telling to knowledge-transforming in the Bereiter & Scardamalia model. The use of the self-assessment process, shows that positive changes may be made to achieve both surface changes as well as meaning changes and that such changes made by the students during the writing process could improve the content, organisation and language of the written work. Further, it was demonstrated that self-assessment has a positive impact on the attitude of inexperienced writers, allowing them to become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses. In providing clarity to their own weaknesses, students were better able to identify the areas the most needed improvement. This is of particular benefit in the Libyan classroom context due to the teaching structure and the prevalence of large class sizes (See Sections 1.1 & 2.4.2.2.1.).

Andrade and Bouley (2003), in their study of the writing of seventh and eighth-grade students, found a positive relationship between self-assessment and the quality of writing. Some research (e.g. Andrade, 2001) suggests that simply handing out and explaining a rubric may increase the students' knowledge of the criteria for the assignment and subsequently help students produce work of higher quality. A key motivation for the use of self-assessment practices in the writing classroom is to address the need for students to develop strong habits of drafting and revision (Bardine & Fulton, 2008; Boud & Falchikov, 2006, McCarthy et al,

1985). Through thorough use of directed revising activities, students are more likely to submit a final draft of higher quality (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2002). It is also suggested that teaching students to revise when they practice writing essays will build a lifelong foundation of revising skill and will improve a student's writing in other domains (Boud, 1995; Campillo, 2006; Swanson et al, 1991; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2002). This process of learning to revise begins at the novice stage of writing development and is fostered by encouraging students to look reflectively at their own work (Honsa, 2013). It should initially be introduced as a revision technique, especially for those whose proficiency level is low. As in the current study, self-assessment was given to inexperienced EFL students with low proficiency level to be used in the revision stage of the writing process. In this light, Wang (2007, pp. 313-314) effectively concludes that:

'Self-assessment is more of help in self-editing and revising than in composing process itself. The co-establishment of the rubric "forces" the learner to have a second, if not more, thought on the criteria of writing assessment and consequently have a better understanding about them. The deep consideration of each individual criterion will leave impression on learners' mind and urges them to follow the guide in their own writing'.

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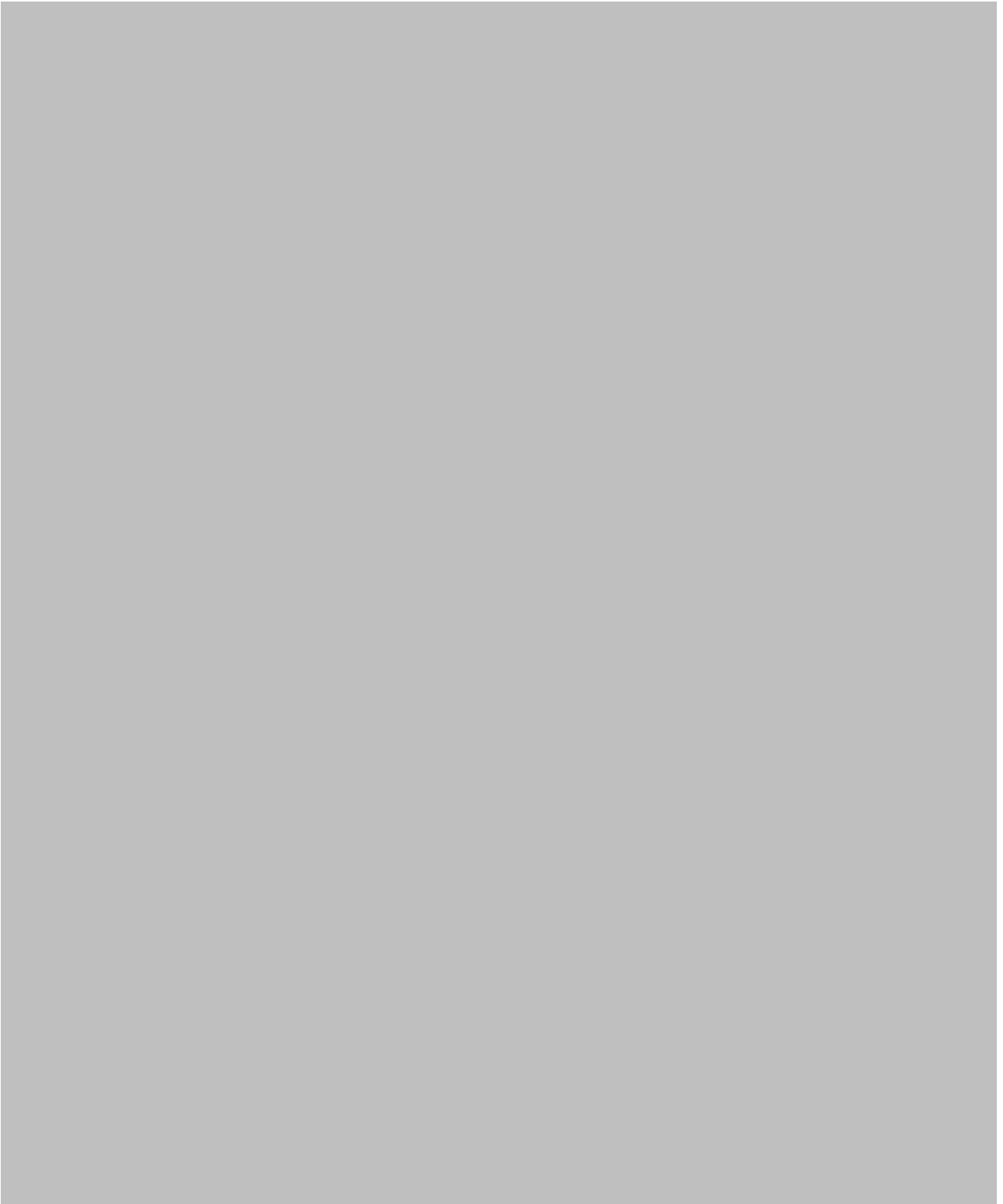
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Appendix 1 (a): Supervisor letter



Appendix 1 (b): Study permission form

Title of Study: The Effect of Self-assessment on Inexperienced EFL Students' Writing during Revision

Name of researcher: Huda Amer Elgadal

[Redacted]

Dear Sir/ Madame,

My name is Huda Elgadal and I am a PhD student in the University of Birmingham in the UK. I would be grateful if you could grant me a permission to conduct part of my research at your department.

If this is acceptable, please tick the box shown, sign and date this form.

Head of English Department

☐

Name: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor contact details

Dr Suganthi John

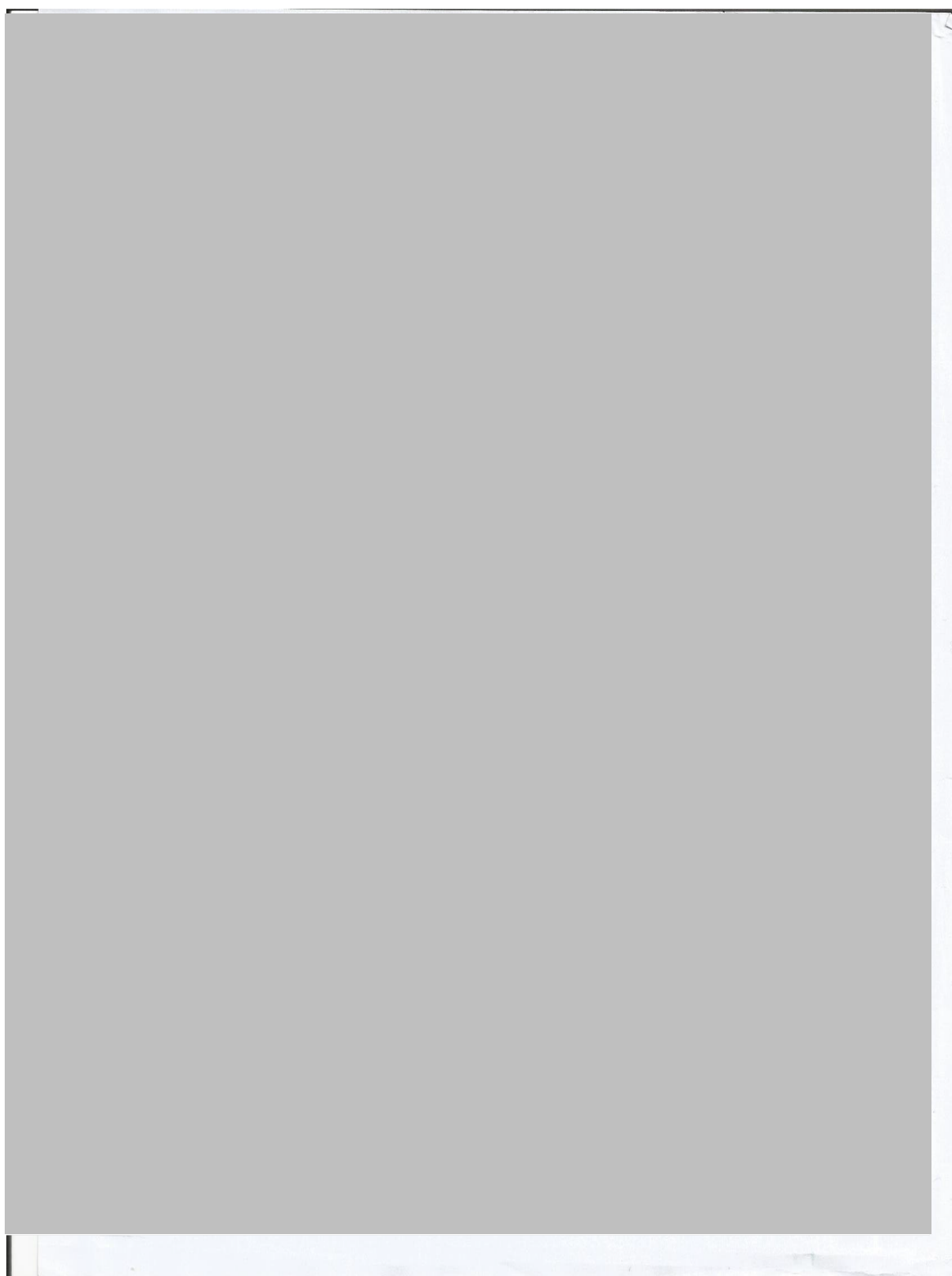
Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics

School of English, Drama, American & Canadian Studies

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Appendix 1 (c): Study permission at the University of Zawya (University D)



Appendix 2: Consent form for students in Libya

Title of Study: The Effect of Self-assessment on Inexperienced EFL Students' Writing during Revision

Name of researcher: Huda Amer Elgadal

[Redacted]

Dear All,

My name is Huda Elgadal and I am a PhD student in the University of Birmingham in the UK. I would be grateful if you agree to participate in this study in which I will ask you to write about two topics one of which you will revise and rewrite it at home. I will be using two drafts of your writing (first and revised) as part of my data collection which will be presented in my research. Please be assured that all your writing in my research will remain anonymous.

Please tick if consent to the above

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

☐

Name: _____

Date: _____

Dr Suganthi John

Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics

School of English, Drama, American & Canadian Studies

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Appendix 3: Questionnaire participant information sheet

Title of Study: The Effect of Self-assessment on Inexperienced EFL Students' Writing during Revision

Name of researcher: Huda Amer Elgadal

[REDACTED]

This study is being conducted as part of my PhD degree in the Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics, School of English, Drama, American & Canadian Studies, University of Birmingham. The study has received ethical approval.

The purpose of this study is to collect data for my research which aims to investigate the effect of self-assessment on the development of inexperienced EFL Libyan students' writing during the revision stage in terms of content, organisation and language.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a short questionnaire.

You will not be asked to provide your name, but only a contact email address. The email addresses will be kept confidential.

The analysis of the data will be written up in a report for my degree. You will not be identifiable in the write up or any publication which might ensue.

This study is supervised by Dr Suganthi John, who may be contacted at the address and telephone number below.

Dr Suganthi John

Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics

School of English, Drama, American & Canadian Studies

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Appendix 4: Informed consent form for the questionnaire (participants in the UK)

Title of Study: The Effect of Self-assessment on Inexperienced EFL Students' Writing during Revision

Name of researcher: Huda Amer Elgadal

By giving permission, I understand that:

- I have been informed about the nature of this study and willingly consent to take part in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time and with no need to provide any kind of explanation.
- I am over 19 years of age.

Name _____

Signature _____

Appendix 5: Writing instruction for both groups

Time: 2 hours

(Pre- test)

On the board

Writing topic: What are the differences between living in a big city or a small town?

- 1- Warmer: Allocated time 10 minutes
The class teacher and I greet students and check absences.
- 2- I introduce the topic after writing it on the board by asking the students the following questions:
Brain storming: 20 mins
 - a. How many differences can you think of?
 - b. Where do you live? Do you live in a city or a town? Or have you experienced living in both places?

I elicited answers from students and write them on the board.

Social life	Job opportunities	Pollution
		Fresh air
Education	internet cafes	
Good schools	Shops	
	Entertainment	
Good universities	Good hospitals	
Lived in both places	Transportation	Food

3- Students writing their first draft

Name: _____

Group: _____

Time allocated: 90 minutes

Directions: Write an essay of at least three paragraphs on the following topic.

The Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

[illegible]

4- Students' drafts were collected after they finish their writing.

5- Closure: drafts were counted.

6- I thanked students and dismissed them.

Appendix 6: Self-assessment sheet

Name: _____ Date _____ Class _____

Topic: _____

Choose one of the three following answers which corresponds most closely to the way you write and then use the following key to score your answers.

Yes = 2 marks

To some extent = 1 mark

No = 0.5 mark

1- Content Section

1- My introduction offers a clear indication of the topic and purpose.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No _____

2- The main ideas in my writing are supported by specific examples, reasons, facts, details or evidence.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No _____

3- The conclusion summarises the main points in the writing.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No _____

Total score _____

2- Organisation Section

Score

1- My writing is organised into paragraphs.

a. Yes

b. to some extent

c. No

2- Each paragraph contains one main idea.

a. Yes

b. to some extent

c. No

3- My paragraphs are cohesive through the use of transition words.

a. Yes

b. to some extent

c. No

Total score

3- Language Section
For each criteria listed below, rate the following by writing the score in the appropriate box. Then give a score out of two for each criterion. Finally add up your marks and write the total out of 12 at the end.

Language criteria/ components	No mistakes 2 marks	From 1-3 mistakes 1.5 marks	From 4-6 mistakes 1 mark	More than 7 mistakes 0.5 mark	Score
Spelling					
Punctuation					
Capitalisation					
Subject-verb Agreement					
Consistent verb-tense					
Word order					
Total score					12

Areas requiring more work:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Appendix 7: Questionnaire for participants in the UK

Dear Participants,

This questionnaire has been created as part of a research study, conducted by Huda Elgadal, in the Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics, University of Birmingham. The aim of the current questionnaire is to investigate your experience of learning how to write in Arabic and English in Libya. There are a number of questions, grouped into four sections as shown below.

Section 1: Background information

Section 2: Teaching writing

Section 3: The assessment of writing

Section 4: Any further comments on your experience of writing in Arabic or English

I would be grateful if you would answer this questionnaire fully.

Section 1: Background information

Participant's email address: _____

Department: _____ University: _____

Years of English learning: _____ Year of graduation: _____

1- How long have you studied writing (composition/ 'inshaa'¹) in Arabic?

-----years

2- How long have you studied writing in English?

-----years

****Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your answer in the following questions.***

3- What type of schools did you attend before college?

Public School	
Private School	

4-When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in Arabic?

Very difficult	
Difficult	
Neutral	
Easy	
Very easy	

5- When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in English?

Very difficult	
Difficult	
Neutral	
Easy	
Very easy	

6- If you have any difficulties in writing in Arabic and/ or English, what are these difficulties? *(Please tick as many as apply).*

No	Aspects of writing	Arabic	English
1	Writing an introduction		
2	Writing relevant information on the topic		
3	Writing a conclusion		

¹ 'Inshaa' here refers to teaching Arabic composition and not learning how to write in Arabic as in the early stages at schools.

4	Organizing ideas		
5	Connecting ideas		
6	Vocabulary		
7	Grammatical structures		
8	Mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation and capitalization, etc.)		
9	Communicating the message		
10	Planning		
11	Revising		
12	Other,(Please specify)		

7- In the university, did your English teachers use English or Arabic when teaching English writing? *(Please circle or underline your answer).*

- a) English only
- b) Arabic only
- c) More English than Arabic
- d) More Arabic than English

Please tick the appropriate box in front of either language in the following questions.

8- Did your teachers teach you how to plan before writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		
English		

9- Did your teacher teach you how to revise writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		
English		

10- Were you encouraged to write drafts in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		
English		

If you answered No to Q 10 for both languages, please go to Q 13.

11- If you answered yes to Q 10, how many drafts did you write in English and in Arabic at any stage of studying writing?

Language	None	One draft	Two drafts	Three drafts	More
Arabic					
English					

12- When you rewrote your writing, what sort of changes did you make?

Language	Changes in content (related to ideas, knowledge of the subject, and development of topic and thesis)	Changes in organisation (How the text is divided into paragraphs and how individual ideas are connected through the use of connecting devices)	Changes in grammar (e.g. subject-verb agreement, consistent-verb- tenses and word order).	Changes in mechanics (i.e. spelling, punctuation and capitalisation)	None
Arabic					
English					

13- If you haven't experienced rewriting your English writing before and were asked to revise, which of the following elements in your writing would you find difficult to revise. Please circle or underline the number to indicate level of difficulty

1 – Very difficult 2 – Difficult 3 – Neutral 4 – Easy 5 – Very easy

Revising spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Revising capitalisation	1	2	3	4	5
Revising punctuation	1	2	3	4	5
Revising vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
Revising grammar	1	2	3	4	5
Revising linking devices (transitions)	1	2	3	4	5
Revising ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Revising physical structure of writing (introduction, body paragraph/s and conclusion).	1	2	3	4	5

Section2: Teaching Writing

14- What techniques did your teacher use to teach you writing in Arabic and English? (*Tick as many as apply.*)

No	Techniques of teaching writing in Arabic and English	Arabic	English
1	We read and imitated examples of other writers		
2	We re-copied examples.		
3	We took the title of the essay and wrote about it at home		
4	We wrote in class.		
5	Teachers gave lectures about writing		

6	Teachers teach grammar in writing classes		
7	We learned how to organise writing		
8	We peer-assessed each other's essays.		
9	We self-assessed our written essays		
10	We wrote letters to other people.		
12	We wrote research papers.		
13	We read our papers out loud		
14	We wrote journals or diaries		
15	We brain stormed ideas about topics		
16	We wrote different drafts		
17	None of the above		

(Please write the number of the techniques stated in the above table)

Most technique used: Arabic _____ English _____

Second most used: Arabic _____ English _____

Third most used: Arabic _____ English _____

15- What are methods of organization you were taught in English?

Organisation of ideas	Answers
Three essay parts: introduction, body, and conclusion	
Cause/ Effect; Problem/ Solution	
Order of Importance	
Other, please specify:	

Section 3: Assessment of writing

16- In the exam, did you write about a topic which you had written about before?

(Please circle or underline the answer to indicate your opinion)

a- Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

17- Did your teacher provide you with a list of topics which were going to be included in the exam? *(Please circle the answer to indicate your opinion)*

a- Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

18- Which things from the list below do you think your teachers emphasized when they graded your English and Arabic writing? *(Tick as many as apply.)*

Focus	Arabic	English
1- Beauty of language		
2- Clarity of main idea		
3- Correct grammar and spelling		
4- Expressing your true feelings		
5- Length of paper		
6- Neatness and handwriting		
7- Originality and imagination		
8- Organization of ideas		
9- Vocabulary		
10- Quoting experts and other sources		
11- Using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas		
12- Other, <i>(please specify)</i> :		
13- I don't know		

19- How did your teacher indicate an error in your writing? *(Tick as many as apply.)*

No	Ways of indicating errors	Arabic	English
1-	By showing where the error is and giving a clue about how to correct it		
2-	By showing the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and not paying attention to the ideas expressed		
3-	By ignoring the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and only paying attention to the ideas expressed		
4-	By ignoring everything and only giving the final mark		
5-	Other (please specify):		

Section4: Please write down any comments on your learning English or Arabic writing experience (any information you think that can be useful for this project e.g., how writing in Arabic and English should be organised, differences between writing in Arabic and English, your strengths and weaknesses, etc.).

End of questionnaire

Thank you

Appendix 8: Post-study feedback form for the experimental group

This feedback form is designed to find out your attitude towards using the ‘**self-assessment sheet**’ in your writing.

Direction: Dear student, after applying the self-assessment sheet criteria to your writing, please read the following statements very carefully. Then, circle the appropriate choice which indicates the extent to which you agree with the statement.

1- I feel that assessing my own writing has made me aware of what I need to improve.

a- Strongly agree b- Agree c- Disagree d- Strongly disagree

2- I think self-assessment is very difficult technique to carry out.

b- Strongly agree b- Agree c- Disagree d- Strongly disagree

3- Rank the following in terms of which is the easiest to self-assess (from 1. Easy to 3. Difficult):

.....Content

.....Organisation

.....Language

Appendix 9: Questionnaire results

How long have you studied writing in Arabic & English?	Number of years of studying Arabic and English writing		
	4 Years	6 Years	7 Years
Arabic		100%	
English	83 %		17%

Questionnaire responses to questions 1 & 2

What type of school did you attend before college?	Public school	Private school
Percentage	100%	0%

Questionnaire responses to questions 3

How do you find writing in both languages?	Arabic		English	
	No.	%	No.	%
Very difficult	0	0%	15	46%
Difficult	0	0%	10	31%
Neutral	0	0%	7	21%
Easy	13	40%	0	0%
Very easy	19	59%	0	0%

Questionnaire responses to question 4 & 5

Difficulties in writing Arabic and English		Arabic		English	
No	Aspects of writing	No.	%	No.	%
1	Writing an introduction	0	0%	0	0%
2	Writing relevant information on the topic	0	0%	15	46%
3	Writing a conclusion	0	0%	0	0%
4	Organizing ideas	0	0%	29	90%
5	Connecting ideas	1	3%	22	68%
6	Vocabulary	0	0%	25	78%
7	Grammatical structures	0	0%	12	37%
8	Mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation and capitalization, etc.)	0	0%	7	21%
9	Communicating the message	0		8	25%

10	Planning	0 0%	10 31%
11	Revising	0 0%	27 84%
12	Other,(Please specify)	0 0%	0 0%

Questionnaire responses to question6

Did your English teachers use English or Arabic when teaching English writing?	English only	Arabic only	More English than Arabic	More Arabic than English
	18	0	10	4
	56%	0%	31%	12%

Questionnaire responses to question 7 regarding language of instruction

Question 9, 10 and 11 sought answers regarding process writing and asked students if they were taught how to plan before starting writing, revise their writing or to write drafts.

Writing process	Arabic		English	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Planning	0 0%	32 100%	11 34%	21 65%
Revising	0 0%	32 100%	2 6%	30 93%
Writing drafts	0 0%	32 100%	2 6%	30 94%

Language	One draft	Two drafts	Three drafts	More
Arabic	/	/	/	/
English	/	2 6%	/	/

Q12When you rewrote your writing, what sort of changes did you make?	Arabic	English
Changes in content	/	/
Changes in organisation	/	/
Changes in grammar	/	2 6%
Changes in mechanics	/	2 6%
None	/	/

Question 13 what do you find difficult to revise?					
Aspect of writing	Level of difficulty				
	Very difficult	Difficult	Neutral	Easy	Very easy
Revising spelling	/	10 31%	5 15%	/	17 53%
Revising capitalisation	/	/	/	2 6%	30 94%
Revising punctuation	/	8 25%	12 37%	9 28%	3 9%
Revising vocabulary	10 31%	/	22 69%	/	/
Revising grammar	6 19%	3 9%	13 40%	4 12%	
Revising linking devices	/	4 12%	11 34%	17 53%	/
Revising ideas	18 56%	6 19%	8 25%	/	/
Revising physical structure of writing	2 6%	7 21%	12 37%	11 34%	/

Q 14	What techniques did your teacher use to teach you writing in Arabic and English?		
No	Techniques of teaching writing in Arabic and English	Arabic	English
1	We read and imitated examples of other writers	0 0%	27 84%
2	We took the title of the essay and wrote about it at home	32 100%	29 90%
3	We wrote in class.	12 37%	32 100%
4	We focus on theoretical knowledge of essay writing (teachers gave lectures about writing)	0 0%	29 90%
5	We studied grammar and did grammar exercises.	0 0%	24 75%
6	We learned patterns of organization.	0 0%	29 90%
7	We peer-assessed each other's essays.	0 0%	0 0%
8	We self-assessed our written essays	0 0%	0 0%
9	We wrote letters to other people.	0 0%	5 15%
10	We wrote research papers.	0 0%	0 0%
11	We read our papers out loud	0	0

		0%	0%
12	We wrote journals or diaries	0 0%	0 0%
13	We brain stormed ideas about topics	0 0%	17 53%
14	We wrote different drafts	0 0%	2 6%

Q 15-Method of Organisation	%
Introduction – body- conclusion	100%
Cause/ Effect; Problem/ Solution	0%
Order of Importance	0%
Other, please specify:	0%

Question	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Q16- In the exam, did you write about a topic which you had written about before?	0 0%	11 34%	13 41%	6 19%	2 6%
Q17- Did your teacher provide you with a list of topics which were going to be included in the exam?	24 75%	0 0%	5 15%	0 0%	3 9%

Q18- Which things from the list below do you think your teachers emphasized when they graded your Arabic and English writing?	Arabic	English
1- Beauty of language	0 0%	0 0%
2- Clarity of main idea	0 0%	12 37%
3- Correct grammar and spelling	0 0%	29 90%
4- Expressing your true feelings	0 0%	0 0%
5- Length of paper	18 56%	0 0%
6- Neatness and handwriting	28 87%	12 37%
7- Originality and imagination	0 0%	0 0%
8- Organization of ideas	0	15

	0%	47%
9- Vocabulary	0 0%	12 37%
10- Quoting experts and other sources	0 0%	0 0%
11- Using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas	0 0%	17 53%
12- Other, (<i>please specify</i>):	0 0%	0 0%
13- I don't know (Apart from grammar and spelling)	4 12%	15 47%

Q19-How did your teacher indicate an error in your writing?		Arabic	English
1-	By showing where the error is and giving a clue about how to correct it	0 0%	2 6%
2-	By showing the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and not paying attention to the ideas expressed	6 18%	26 81%
3-	By ignoring the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and only paying attention to the ideas expressed	0 0%	4 12%
4-	By ignoring everything and only giving the final mark	26 81%	3 9%
5-	Other (please specify):	0 0%	0 0%

Appendix 10: UK participants' responses to questionnaire 'section 4'

Participant 1: I think you have covered all the points. Writing in Arabic is easy for everyone. We don't have to worry about capitalisation or punctuation except for full stop. In English I consider writing is the most difficult skill. I feel everything there in my mind but when I start writing I cannot organise my ideas. Moreover, I have to a wide range of vocabulary. I think teachers need to find good way of teaching writing.

Participant 2: I do not think I have problems in Arabic writing. My weaknesses are in English I think is spelling and organising my ideas. The problem if I want to change something in my writing I cannot change it I say to myself I will not delete my writing after all this.

Participants 3: The problem in Libya is that all teachers follow the same way and ask student to write about the topics even in different institution. For me writing is still very difficult. It is very difficult to write coherent paragraph. In addition we only take 90 mins a week to study writing.

Participant 4: Writing in Arabic is easy. But in English it is very difficult. But I am following what our teacher taught us. For example if I want to write a paragraph I have to write topic sentence then supporting sentences and then conclusion. And it is the same for multi paragraph compositions.

Participant 5: All students in Libya find writing in English is really difficult. I think because teachers just discuss topic with us. He needs us to study grammar and definition of some terms. And we always wrote about a topic that I have prepared in advance.

Participant 6: As a student graduated from the department of English in Libya, I think writing is the most difficult skill between the three other language skills. I myself cannot compare Arabic composition (Inshaa) to English composition. Writing Arabic composition does not need a lot of effort to produce a coherent piece of writing. While, writing in English is very difficult. I need to think of the words and vocabulary that I will use. I also have to worry about punctuations which in some cases if misused change the meaning completely. I also need to think about the organising my ideas to make the writing flow.

Now, as a teacher, sometimes I find it very difficult to teach students how to write. I do most of the theoretical part in the class. I teach students coherence, cohesion, transitions, organisation, paragraph development, how to write introduction and how to write conclusion. But, when it comes to practice, students find it very difficult to follow what I have taught them. To be honest, I myself still find difficulties in many cases to write a good essay or a paragraph. I would like to focus on a point you mentioned in one of the questions regarding correction of writing. I answered that I only focus on correction spelling and grammar. It is very difficult to comment on every single mistake in students' writing as I correct 70 or 80 papers sometimes. Therefore I just circle or underline mistakes in spelling and grammar.

In general, writing as I said is an obstacle for many Libyan learners even in the UK. Many PhD students struggle to produce good writing. I would like to add one more point about writing i.e. the reason behind the poor writing in Libya in general is the teaching of writing itself. Teachers give more focus to grammar when teaching and correcting compositions. Also, there are very weak teachers especially in secondary schools. Moreover, most teachers including me, give students a group of topics to write about or look at before exam. I am against this but I had to do it due to the low students' level in writing.

Teaching writing in Libya shouldn't be taught by anyone. There should be exploring and trying other techniques to improve the quality of teaching writing.

Good luck

Participants 7: The writing lessons for the English language students in Libya is not of high standards. This may be due to the lack of practice in pronunciation and writing. To master the English language, the students should be scheduled to spending more time writing. They are custom to discuss topics that only students that live in Libya are aware of. However, the writing in the Arabic language is of perfect standards. Due to the fact that is not as difficult as the English language plus it our first language and the language they speak in their households.

Participants 8: From my own experience as a student in the Libyan educational system, the teaching of writing is not given enough attention in the classroom. For example, the writing tasks are usually given as homework to the students without giving enough explanations and practice in the classroom. For example, although the main components of the essay (i.e. introduction, body and conclusion) are introduced theoretically, the Libyan teachers do not

pay attention to teaching more specific details such as how students should organise their ideas and construct the paragraphs, provide examples and facts to support their opinions and arguments, cohesion, coherence, editing, revising and giving them useful expressions and vocabulary for the given writing topic. The students do not have the opportunity to practice their writing in the classroom owing to the large number of the students in the class and the timing is very limited (i.e. 45 minutes a week in secondary school and 90 minutes in universities). The focus is always on teaching and presenting various grammatical structures even at university levels. Clearly, what the Libyan teachers adopting and using in teaching English writing is the product approach which in a way does not suffice the students' need to improve their writing ability in English language.

The students usually practice writing a basic paragraph with topic sentences, supporting sentences and the concluding sentences when they are in their first and second university year. Then, they practice writing multi paragraphs in the third and fourth university years. The students do not given the opportunity to write long essays and assignments to practice writing. However, even at these stages the ultimate focus is teaching writing theoretically.

Therefore, some suggestions should be made regarding how English writing should be taught in Libyan educational system. More time should be given to teach writing in the classroom. Students should be given the opportunity to practise their writing in the classroom. Libyan teachers should use both the product approach and the process approach in their teaching and they should try various strategies to teach writing and not just follow traditional methods.

Participant 9: During my learning experience, I found that learning Arabic writing was not so effective. Teachers gave us topics and we wrote about them at home. Yet, I think Arabic writing is easy. Whereas in learning English writing, our teachers used different techniques but our writings are still poor. We still need to know more about the practical knowledge of writing. Writing should be given more time.

Participant 10: Arabic writing is taught different from English writing. Teachers usually give students topics to write it at home. In teaching English teachers also gives us topic to write about at home. In English, teacher cares more about spelling mistakes and length of writing. It's the same thing in Arabic writing, teachers care more about spelling mistakes and length of the writing. I would also like to add something else, many teachers speak Arabic when they teach us and I think this is one of the points that can affect students' ability. Those

who usually speak English only are those teachers who come from non-Arabic speaking country. Especially, in the last few years.

Participant 11: I would add something about ways of indicating errors by my teachers. It depends on the teachers some of them show the errors in grammar and some of them ignore everything.

My weakness in English writing is in: grammar, spelling and organisation.

In Arabic the focus was just on the length and spelling and ignoring to correct ways of quoting and how to avoid plagiarism and how to write in academic way.

Participant 12: Establishing criteria and feedback timing need to be considered when writing topics.

Appendix 11: Students' comments (from the experimental group) about self-assessment

Students	Students' comments
Student 1	<i>'I always have problems with spelling, this sheet is very helpful. I like it.'</i>
Student 2	<i>'Self-assessment is not only a great behaviour in your daily life but it also it's a great way to find out your mistakes in your study, so you will be successful in your study. As we know; if we know our mistakes, we will be able to avoid doing them again especially if we discover them by ourselves. There are some students who don't admit their mistakes if teacher or another person tell them about their mistakes, So like these student, this way, self-assessment, will help them about their mistakes!! And learn how to improve their selves. My point of view If I revise what I have written, I can notice my mistakes. This way help me more than another way to improve my self although it is often a little bit difficult.'</i>
Student 3	<i>'I have never ever revised my writing before and our doctor never asked us to revise and he corrected our writing, he just corrects spelling mistatkes and mistakes in verbs. This is a good idea I know that introduction is first but I do not know what exacly what to put in the introduction. Now I know I wish I had this from the first year and good luck.'</i>
Student 4	<i>Student 4: 'this is the first time I revise my writing in all my life but I think it is a good idea.'</i>
Student 5	<i>I like the idea but I can not revise every thing only grammar and spelling.'</i>
Student 6	<i>'our doctor only gives our writing with a mark and do not ask to revise.'</i>
Student 7	<i>' good idea to make my writing better I wish we knew it before.'</i>
Student 8	<i>'I only revise when I am in the exam before I give my paper to the doctor. When I revise I just check spelling. Now I know I need to check ideas and organisation. I support this new idea to give to student in year 1 2 and 3 to help to write better. It is a fantastic idea. Good luck.'</i>
Student 9	<i>: I only chekced spelling capitalisation and other things very difficult.'</i>
Student 10	<i>'I will use this with students when I become a teacher and good luck.'</i>
Student 11	<i>'First time I revise content and organisation.'</i>
Student 12	<i>'I think it is a good idea. At the beginning I thought I will find any mistakes in my writing but then when I followed the points in the sheet I really made some correction to somethings.'</i>
Student 13	<i>'Thank you. It is a good idea to rewrite our writing and check for mistakes. First time I revise.'</i>
Student 14	<i>'By using this way I know what I am good at and what I am not good at. Now I know that cohesion is a problem and also punctuation.'</i>
Student 15	<i>It is a good idea if we have more practice.'</i>
Student 16	<i>'I do not have enough words when I write. This makes it difficult to write long wriitng'</i>
Student 17	<i>'I think it is helpful'</i>
Student 18	<i>'I have problems in sentence structure. I don't know how to revise that'</i>

Student 19	<i>'Never revise. It is easy to follow especially the language'</i>
Student 20	<i>'Vocabulary is difficult for me when I write.'</i>
Student 21	<i>'My spelling is bad'</i>
Student 22	<i>'I need to work more on how to connect my ideas'</i>
Student 23	<i>'I always make mistakes in grammar'</i>
Student 24	<i>'I have problem with spelling. But I know when I write a word it's spelled wrong but I have to write if I cannot find another word that I know it's spelling. Better than not writing it.'</i>
Student 25	<i>'I don't have major problems in spelling, but only some words especially words that have 'i' and 'e' like 'describe' or 'discribe'. But I think self-assessment sheet makes us go and check the word in the Dictionary whenever we revise so I don't forget it again.'</i>
Student 26	<i>'I hate writing. I am good in speaking but not writing'</i>
Student 27	<i>'I need to work more on my connecting wiring'</i>
Student 28	<i>'We never revise, I don't have many problems in writing but sometimes when I look again to it after the teacher gives us our papers I found some silly mistakes like capital letter in the middle.'</i>
Student 29	<i>'No comment my writing is bad and bad and bad.'</i>
Student 30	<i>'I think if we use this from the first year in the university, our writing now is better.'</i>
Student 31	<i>'First time I write my writing again. I corrected some spelling mistake and I added some words. Good Luck'</i>
Student 32	<i>'This self-assessment can show me what to look at and revise. For example I would never check capitalisation because I know I am good at this but when I found in the list capitalisation I concentrated on them and I found one mistake which corrected. I think it is really useful.'</i>

Appendix 12: Guidance sheet for revision for experimental group

1. Guidance sheet for reviewing your essay Adopted from Min (2006)

1. Read the introductory paragraph. Is there a thesis statement toward the end of the introduction?

You need to check that the introduction it is not one sentence but more than a sentence (background information). Does the purpose (thesis statement) contain one main ideas? This shows what you're going to write about. It also shows the organisation of your writing. For example, if you are writing about effects of TV on Family. You need to mention briefly in your thesis statement what aspects you are going to write about in your body paragraph. You should let the reader know that you are discussing positive effects such Family life, educational benefits, exposure to different culture, etc. or negative effects such as lack of communication between children and parents, or discussing both.

2. Now read the first few sentences in the second paragraph (body paragraph). Make sure that the paragraph starts with a topic sentence that has one main idea. After that, check if you have provided discussion. Are there any concrete examples, facts, reasons or explanation in this paragraph to support the main idea? Are they relevant and sequenced properly?

For example, is this paragraph about positive effects or negative effect of TV? Or, is it about one of the positive effects?

3-Do the same for other body paragraph/s if you have more than one body paragrph. Make sure to use transitions between paragraphs. Did you use any transitions to connect this paragraph with the previous one?

4- Read the conclusion. Does it begin with a restatement (but different wording) of the thesis statement? Are you writing a summary of your topic, giving an opinion or both? Make sure that the conclusion that the conclusion does not contain too much irrelevant information to the thesis statement.

Appendix 13: Essays used in training for the experimental group

Example of good writing

Topic: The bad effects of television on children

Nowadays, watching television is already become a common habit in the families. Television has provided a lot of entertainment programs (besides news and education programs) that attract many people to watch television more often than they used to. Unfortunately, some families do not realize that this habit also has bad effects, especially to the children. In my opinion, sometimes watching television can cause a lack of communication between the children and the parents. Moreover, some programs also may have bad effects on children's behaviour and way of thinking.

In some families, watching television habit can cause a lack of communication between the children and the parents. The main factor that causes this problem is that both the children and the parents prefer watching television to having a chat together. In some other cases, some children have their own televisions in their rooms. This situation allows them to come out rarely of their rooms and spend less time with their parents. This point should be seriously looked at to avoid any negative effects that may disrupt family life.

Besides that, watching television also has bad effects in children's way of thinking. This is because there are some programs in television which are broadcasted in unsuitable time or do not have morality aspects. For example, there are films that show criminal actions. If many children watch those films without supervision from their parents, they will think that those criminal actions are legal to do. This problem becomes more serious because some children also try to imitate those bad actions.

In conclusion, it can be said that besides being good source of entertainment, watching television also can be very damaging to family's life, especially children. Some bad programs in television can affect their way of thinking and life style in a bad way. The habit of watching television also causes a lack of communication among the family. Therefore, parents should consider doing other activities with their children like swimming, painting or reading.

2 Examples of weak writing

Topic1: The bad effects of television on children

Television is very good intertainmt device but it has bad effects on children.

Watching television every day have a bad consequens on hellth. Espcailly if you watch for a long time. It also have effects on family life and children. Children may be watch programmes that are not good and then the children become bad. Also watching television is very bad for your eyes. people watch tv for a long time may have eye problems. Families shouls think about other ways to spend time.

At the end, Tv can be bad or good if you can use the right way.

Topic 2: Smoking

Smoking make you less attractive, Smokers have unattractive mouth. Non-smokers are actuely aware of being close to a smoker. Smoking causes unattractive brown stains on teeth. These stains are not easy to remove. Without professional help. Smokers are twice as likely to lose their teeth as non-smokers. It's helps to build up plaque on teeth, which causes gum disease. My importantly, giving up smoking reduces the possibility of heart disease. your mouth will taste sweeter. your breath will be fresher. Smokers with oral cancer are more likely to die of the disease than non smokers with oral cancer. and give to lips brown clour. smoking is unhealthy.

Appendix 14: Oral instruction of the revision for experimental group using self-assessment

Instruction of revision to experimental group

Photocopied first drafts of students' writing were given back to them.

Please revise your writing using the self-assessment sheet provided.

First read your essay.

For example, check if you wrote an introduction which has purpose statement (thesis statement) and some background. (More explanation was provided)

Take a clean sheet of paper, write your name clearly and start writing your revised draft.

You can use the guidance sheet and the 'better model example' we used in the training session to clarify any issue in the self-assessment sheet.

Check for mistakes in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, subject-verb agreement, word order. You may find other mistakes that are not listed in the self-assessment sheet. Try and correct them.

You may need to rewrite your essay more than once.

The aim of this exercise is to help you write better drafts and to encourage you to revise. Trying to locate and correct your own mistakes may help you improve your writing by avoiding making these mistakes in your future work.

Please try to complete the exercise by yourself. You can use dictionaries, textbooks or handouts to help you with the task.

Any questions regarding the task

Thank you

Teacher: At this stage, the writing teacher promised the students to give them a bonus of one mark in their final exam if they revised and brought back their writing

Appendix 15: Oral instruction of the revision for control group

Note: This was done orally in Arabic & English.

Photocopied first drafts of students' writing were given back to them

Read your essay and revise any mistakes you may find.

Please rewrite your essay in a clean piece of paper.

Check your introduction, your body paragraph and conclusion.

Check for mistakes in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, subject-verb agreement, word order and any other grammatical mistakes you may find in your writing.

You may need to write your essay more than once.

The aim of rewriting your essay is to help you write better drafts and to encourage you to revise. Correcting your own mistakes may help you improve your writing by avoiding making these mistakes in your future work.

Please try to complete the exercise by yourself. You can use dictionaries, textbooks or handouts.

Any questions regarding the task

Thank you

Teacher: At this stage, the writing teacher promised the students to give them a bonus of one mark in their final exam if they revised and brought back their writing

Appendix 16: Tables used to record and code students' writing and revisions

1- Content

Types of introduction	Before revision	After revision
Clear Introduction		
Unclear introduction (a) One or two introductory sentences with repetition of the words of the title		
Unclear introduction type 2 (b) misleading		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consil.	Distrb.
Word				
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib, Distribution

Type of revision to introduction			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	Surface & meaning

Body paragraph	Before revision	After revision
One sentence body paragraph		
Body paragraph with underdeveloped ideas		
Developed body paragraph		

Type of revision to body paragraph			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consil.	Distrb.
Word				

Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				
Transitions				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib, Distribution

Conclusion	Before revision	After revision
No conclusion		
Unclear conclusion		
Clear conclusion		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consil.	Distrib.
Word				
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib, Distribution

Type of revision to conclusion			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning

2- Organisation

Physical structure of an essay	Before revision	After revision
Structure (1) writing consisting of three paragraphs or more.		
Structure (2) & (3) writing consisted of one or two paragraphs only		

Revision to structure	
No revision	
Consolidation	
Distribution	
Addition	

Idea organisation	Before revision	After revision
Each paragraph contains different ideas		
Each paragraph contains one main idea		

Transitions	Before revision	After revision
All transitions used were accurate		
Transitions used but more than one transition is inaccurate		
No transitions used		

Revision to transition	
Addition	
Deletion	
Substitution	

Please write the number of transitions revised there is more than one

3- Mechanical and grammatical mistakes included in the SA sheet

Mistakes in grammar and mechanics as stated in the SA sheet	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Spelling	SP		
Capitalisation	Cap		
Punctuation	Pun		
Subject verb agreement	SVA		
Consistent verb tense	VT		
Word order	WO		

Other grammatical mistakes

Please add any other grammatical issues e.g. problems with sentence	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Wrong form	WF		
Sentence structure	SS		
Article	A		
Pronoun	PN		
Plural	P		
Run on	R		
Fragment	F		

Note:

- There may be more than one mistake in a word, a phrase, a clause or a sentence.
- In evaluating grammatical and mechanical mistakes, we ignore awkward sentences, wrong form of words, repetition and problems with fragment.
- Count the number of mistakes (included in the above table) and revisions made for each part of the essay and write it down in the provided section.

Appendix 17: Grading rubric EFL composition profile by Jacob et. Al, (1981)

Appendix 20: EFL composition profile by Jacob et.al, (1981)

ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE				
STUDENT	DATE	TOPIC		
SCORE	LEVEL	CRITERIA	COMMENTS	
CONTENT	30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable • substantive • thorough development of thesis • relevant to assigned topic		
	26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of subject • adequate range • limited development of thesis • mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail		
	21-17	FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of subject • little substance • inadequate development of topic		
	16-13	VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject • non-substantive • not pertinent • OR not enough to evaluate		
ORGANIZATION	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression • ideas clearly stated/ supported • succinct • well-organized • logical sequencing • cohesive		
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy • loosely organized but main ideas stand out • limited support • logical but incomplete sequencing		
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent • ideas confused or disconnected • lacks logical sequencing and development		
	9-7	VERY POOR: does not communicate • no organization • OR not enough to evaluate		
VOCABULARY	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range • effective word/idiom choice and usage • word form mastery • appropriate register		
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range • occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured		
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: limited range • frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage • meaning confused or obscured		
	9-7	VERY POOR: essentially translation • little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form • OR not enough to evaluate		
LANGUAGE USE	25-22	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions • few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions		
	21-18	GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions • minor problems in complex constructions • several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured		
	17-11	FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/complex constructions • frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions • meaning confused or obscured		
	10-5	VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules • dominated by errors • does not communicate • OR not enough to evaluate		
MECHANICS	5	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions • few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing		
	4	GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but meaning not obscured		
	3	FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • poor handwriting • meaning confused or obscured		
	2	VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions • dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • handwriting illegible • OR not enough to evaluate		
TOTAL SCORE	READER	COMMENTS		

Appendix 18: More information about surface and meaning revisions from Faigley and Witte (1981)

Surface Changes

The term ‘surface changes’ can further be divided into two types: ‘formal changes’ and ‘meaning-preserving changes’. Formal changes encompass the typical ways to copy-edit through spelling; tense, number, and modality; abbreviations; punctuation and format. Meaning-preserving changes include those that rephrase the ideas included in the text but do not alter the concepts. This can be further described through the following definitions: ‘additions’ make explicit in the text what had previously been supposed; ‘deletions’ result in the opposite, encouraging the reader to infer what had previously been definite; ‘substitutions’ replace a word or phrase with another that conveys the same thing; ‘permutations’ refer to rearranging the words in a sentence or phrase; ‘distributions’ refer to putting text that had previously been within one sentence or segment into two sentences; and ‘consolidations’ do the opposite, reducing into one sentence information that was previously dealt with across two sentences.

Meaning Changes

Meaning changes can constitute minor alterations to a text; for example, replacing one sentence for another or changing a phrase. Meaning changes can also involve major changes to the text as a whole, altering the direction and arguments within the writing. Any study of revision should take into consideration the differences between these two methods of applying meaning changes and the spectrum of effect they will have on a finished text. In their study, Faigley and Witte (1981) attempted to identify a way to distinguish between these major and minor changes in meaning, and referred to the model constructed by Kintsch and van Dijk (1978) that focuses on how readers process a piece of writing. The model considers the essay or text being understood at two levels: microstructure, including all concepts in the writing, and macrostructure, referring to the theme of the text in its entirety. These two levels illustrate how a reader understands a text phrase by phrase whilst also taking an overall meaning from what they are reading. Faigley and Witte (1981), after referring to this model, proceed to say that the macrostructure definition does not go far enough as it ‘does not accommodate adequately either the reader’s prior knowledge or the situational context in interpreting discourse’. In their taxonomy a macrostructure change would be a definitive alteration of the summary of a text, and the way in which to differentiate between a macrostructure and a microstructure would be to decide if the particular change alters the

reading of other parts of the text. Under this definition a microstructure change would have no real impact on the summary of the text.

The difference among surface changes, micro-text-based changes, and macro-text-based changes, is that surface changes do not alter the overall meaning of the original sentence, whereas micro-text-based changes affect a group of sentences, paragraphs, or the entire text, but do not alter the summary of a text. Macro-text-based changes, on the other hand, impact upon the overall summary of the text, altering the direction or the gist of the idea presented.

Appendix19: Self-assessment form used in other studies

Appendix 19 (a): Editing form used by Diab (2008, p. 156)

Writer's Name: _____

Audience: _____

Purpose: _____

Point of view: _____

Introduction:

- Includes relevant background highlighting the effects of the problem _____
- Provides a clear-one sentence claim introducing the problem _____

Body:

- Discusses the causes of the problem _____
- Provides relevant supporting details _____
- Suggests possible solutions _____ and refutes them _____
- Proposes the best solution _____
- Explain the steps to implement the best solution _____

Conclusion:

- Restates the claim (the problem) _____
- Sums up the main argument (solution) _____
- Calls for action _____

Credibility:

- No logical fallacies _____
- Reference to two credible sources _____

What did you like best about this essay? _____

What are the specific areas that need to be improved? _____

Appendix 19 (b): Editing form of study 2 used by Diab (2008, pp. 158-159) adapted from Killgalon (1994)

Content (2points)

- Paragraph 1 introduces the topic and includes relevant background information. _____
- Paragraph 1 ends with a clear one- sentence claim with evidence _____
- Paragraph 2 includes the first main reason for the writer's argument _____ and includes sufficient support _____.
- Paragraph 3 includes the second main reason for the writer's argument _____ and includes sufficient support _____.
- Paragraph 4 includes the third main reason for the writer's argument _____ and includes sufficient support _____.
- The essay includes a counter argument(s) _____ and refutation(s) _____. The conclusion restates the claim. _____
- The conclusion sums up the argument _____ and offers closure. _____

Organization (2points)

- Each paragraph starts with a topic sentence. _____
- There is repetition in paragraph 2 _____; in paragraph 3 _____; in paragraph 4 _____.
- There are irrelevant ideas in paragraph 2 _____; in paragraph 3; _____ in paragraph 4 _____.
- Paragraphs are well- connected using transitional signals. _____

Credibility (2points)

- The essay has logical fallacies. _____
- The essay includes proper in-text citations. _____

- The essay has reference to two credible sources. _____

Editor's Suggestions regarding this essay. Give paragraph and line number. (4 points)

Add: _____

Delete: _____

Keep: _____

Change: _____

Adapted from Killgalon (1994)

Appendix19 (c): Self-assessment form used by Aly (2005, pp. 122-124)

Name:

Essay Topic:

Date:

Score:

Directions:

I. Circle the answer that best corresponds to your writing then use the following key to score your essay.

II. Use the following code to score your essay:

Give yourself two marks for each answer “yes”

Give yourself one mark for each answer “To some extent”

Give yourself zero marks for each answer “No”

Content

Introduction:

1- The Introduction of my essay includes a statement of the essay’s central point.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No ____

2- The Introduction of my essay includes the ideas that are discussed in the body.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No ____

Body: **3-** Each idea is explained clearly supported and illustrated in the body.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No ____

Conclusion: **4-** The conclusion clearly summarises the information discussed and/or gives an opinion.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No ____

5- The conclusion refers to a central point and draws the essay to an end.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No ____

Total

10

Organisation: 6- The opening of each paragraph has a clear focus or purpose.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No _____

7- Information is written in logical sequence

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No _____

8- Ideas are tied together using transition words

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No _____

9- Each paragraph in the body has only one central idea.

a. Yes b. to some extent c. No _____

Total
8

Language Use Section

Directions:

For each of the following language components choose the category that you find applicable to your essay. Then assign a score out of two in the column on the right. Finally add up your marks out of 12 in the space left at the end.

Language Criteria	No mistakes 2 marks	From 1-3 mistakes 1.5 marks	From 4-7 mistakes 1 mark	More than 8 mistakes 0.5 mark	Corrections	Score
Mechanics(Spelling & Punctuation)						2
Verb Tense Choice & Formation						2
Subject-verb agreement						2
Fragments						2
Vocabulary (correct word choice)						2

Word Order						2
Total score						12

Additional mistakes not mentioned:

Appendix 19 (d): Self-assessment form used by Honsa (2013)

This self-assessment tool is adapted from the course book for English Course Level 5 by Oshima and Hogue (1997) used by Honsa (2013, pp. 55-56)

Questions	Answers and comments
Organization 1. Does the essay have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion?	Yes/No (Circle one) How many paragraphs does the essay have? How many paragraphs are in the body?
Introduction 2. Do the general statements <input type="checkbox"/> give background information? <input type="checkbox"/> Attract the reader's attention? 3. Does the thesis statement state a clearly focused main idea for the whole essay?	How many general statements are there? Is this a funnel introduction? Yes/No Does it stimulate the reader's interest in the topic? Yes/No Copy the thesis statement below :
Body 4. Does each body paragraph have <input type="checkbox"/> a clearly stated topic sentence with a main idea? <input type="checkbox"/> good development with adequate supporting details (facts, example, or quotation)? <input type="checkbox"/> Unity (one idea per paragraph) <input type="checkbox"/> Coherence (logical organization, transition words, and consistent pronouns)?	Copy the topic sentence of each body paragraph. List supporting details of each paragraph below: Underline any sentences that break the unity. List the transitions between each body paragraph. Circle wrong use of pronouns.
Conclusion 5. Does the conclusion <input type="checkbox"/> restate your thesis or summarise your main points?	What kind of conclusion does the essay have? ____summary of the main points or ____restatement of the thesis

<input type="checkbox"/> Give your final thoughts on the subject of your essay?	
Grammar and mechanics 6. Are quotations used correctly?	Check each quotation for commas, capital letters and quotation marks.
7. Are commas used where necessary?	Circle any comma errors. Add missing commas.
8. Are verb tenses used appropriately?	Check each verb for the appropriate tense. Circle any verbs that you have questions about.
Sentence structure 9. Do all the sentences contain at least one subject and one verb and express a complete thought?	Underline any sentences that you have questions about.
10. Does the essay contain a variety of sentence types?	What sentence type do you use the most often? Simple, compound or complex (Circle one).
Content and discourse 11. Is the content of the essay sufficient and interesting?	Yes/No (Circle one) Anything else you want to add :
12. Is the language used in this essay appropriate for academic discourse?	Yes/No (Circle one) Any comments?
13. Do you think the readers will be convinced? Will the readers agree/disagree with your thesis statement?	Yes/No (Circle one) Why/why not?
14. Is there anything you like/dislike or want to change in this essay?	Explain and clarify why?

Appendix 20: Sample of questionnaires completed by participants in the UK

Dear Participants,

This questionnaire has been created as part of a research study, conducted by Huda Elgadal, in the Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics, University of Birmingham. The aim of the current questionnaire is to investigate your experience of learning how to write in Arabic and English in Libya. There are a number of questions, grouped into four sections as shown below.

Section 1: Background information

Section 2: Teaching writing

Section 3: The assessment of writing

Section 4: Any further comments on your experience of writing in Arabic or English

I would be grateful if you would answer this questionnaire fully.

Participant 1:

Section 1: Background information

Participant's email address: _____

Department: _____ English _____ University: Zwara _____

Years of English learning: 8 years _____ Year of graduation: 2000 _____

1- How long have you studied writing (composition/ 'inshaa') in Arabic?

-----6-----years

2- How long have you studied writing in English?

-----4-----years

**Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your answer in the following questions.*

3- What type of schools did you attend before college?

Public School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Private School	<input type="checkbox"/>

4-When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in Arabic?

Very difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5-When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in English?

Very difficult	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input type="checkbox"/>

6- If you have any difficulties in writing in Arabic and/ or English, what are these difficulties? *(Please tick as many as apply).*

No	Aspects of writing	Arabic	English
1	Writing an introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Writing relevant information on the topic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Writing a conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4	Organizing ideas		√
5	Connecting ideas		√
6	Vocabulary		
7	Grammatical structures		
8	Mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation and capitalization, etc.)		
9	Communicating the message		√
10	Planning		√
11	Revising		√
12	Other,(Please specify)		

7- In the university, did your English teachers use English or Arabic when teaching English writing? *(Please circle or underline your answer).*

- e) English only
- f) Arabic only
- g) More English than Arabic //
- h) More Arabic than English

Please tick the appropriate box in front of either language in the following questions.

8- Did your teachers teach you how to plan before writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English	√	

9- Did your teacher teach you how to revise writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English	√	

10- Were you encouraged to write drafts in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English	√	

If you answered No to Q 11 for both languages, please go to Q 13.

11- If you answered yes to Q 11, how many drafts did you write in English and in Arabic at any stage of studying writing?

Language	None	One draft	Two drafts	Three drafts	More
Arabic		√			
English					

12- When you rewrote your writing, what sort of changes did you make?

Language	Changes in content (related to ideas, knowledge of the subject, and development of topic and thesis)	Changes in organisation (How the text is divided into paragraphs and how individual ideas are connected through the use of connecting devices)	Changes in grammar (e.g. subject-verb agreement, consistent-verb- tenses and word order).	Changes in mechanics (i.e. spelling, punctuation and capitalisation)	None
Arabic	√	√	√	√	
English					

13- If you haven't experienced rewriting your English writing before and were asked to revise, which of the following elements in your writing would you find difficult to revise. Please circle or underline the number to indicate level of difficulty

1 – Very difficult 2 – Difficult 3 – Neutral 4 – Easy 5 – Very easy

Revising spelling	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising capitalisation	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising punctuation	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5
Revising vocabulary	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5
Revising grammar	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising linking devices (transitions)	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising ideas	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5
Revising physical structure of writing (introduction, body paragraph/s and conclusion).	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5

Section2: Teaching Writing

14- What techniques did your teacher use to teach you writing in Arabic and English? (*Tick as many as apply.*)

No	Techniques of teaching writing in Arabic and English	Arabic	English
1	We read and imitated examples of other writers		√
2	We re-copied examples.		√
3	We took the title of the essay and wrote about it at home	√	√
4	We wrote in class.		√
5	Teachers gave lectures about writing		√
6	Teachers teach grammar in writing classes		√

7	We learned how to organise writing		√
8	We peer-assessed each other's essays.		
9	We self-assessed our written essays		
10	We wrote letters to other people.		
12	We wrote research papers.		
13	We read our papers out loud		
14	We wrote journals or diaries		
15	We brain stormed ideas about topics		
16	We wrote different drafts		
17	None of the above		

(Please write the number of the techniques stated in the above table)

Most technique used: Arabic _____3_____ English_____4_____

Second most used: Arabic _____ English_____3_____

Third most used: Arabic _____ English_____5_____

15- What are methods of organization you were taught?

Organisation of ideas	Answers
Three essay parts: introduction, body, and conclusion	√
Cause/ Effect; Problem/ Solution	√
Order of Importance	
Other, please specify:	

Section 3: Assessment of writing

16-In the exam, did you write about a topic which you had written about before?

(Please circle or underline the answer to indicate your opinion)

b- Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

17- Did your teacher provide you with a list of topics which were going to be included in the exam? (Please circle the answer to indicate your opinion)

b- Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

18- Which things from the list below do you think your teachers emphasized when they graded your English and Arabic writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

Focus	Arabic	English
1- Beauty of language	√	
2- Clarity of main idea	√	
3- Correct grammar and spelling		√
4- Expressing your true feelings		
5- Length of paper	√	
6- Neatness and handwriting	√	√
7- Originality and imagination		
8- Organization of ideas		
9- Vocabulary		
10- Quoting experts and other sources		
11- Using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas		
12- Other, (please specify):		
13- I don't know		

19- How did your teacher indicate a mistake in your writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

No	Ways of indicating mistakes	Arabic	English
1-	By showing where the mistake is and giving a clue about how to correct it		
2-	By showing the mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and not paying attention to the ideas expressed		√
3-	By ignoring the mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and only paying attention to the ideas expressed		
4-	By ignoring everything and only giving the final mark	√	
5-	Other (please specify):		

Section4: Please write down any comments on your learning English or Arabic writing experience (any information you think that can be useful for this project e.g., how writing in Arabic and English should be organised, differences between writing in Arabic and English, your strengths and weaknesses, etc.).

_ Establishing criteria and feedback timing need to be considered when writing topics. _____

End of questionnaire

Thank you

Participant 2:

Section 1: Background information

Participant's email address: _____

Department: _____ English _____ University: __Qareyounis/ Benghazi_____

Years of English learning: __8 years_____ Year of graduation: __1998_____

1- How long have you studied writing (composition/ 'inshaa') in Arabic?

-----6-----years

2- How long have you studied writing in English?

-----4-----years

**Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your answer in the following questions.*

3- What type of schools did you attend before college?

Public School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Private School	<input type="checkbox"/>

4-When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in Arabic?

Very difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5- When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in English?

Very difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input type="checkbox"/>

6- If you have any difficulties in writing in Arabic and/ or English, what are these difficulties? *(Please tick as many as apply).*

No	Aspects of writing	Arabic	English
1	Writing an introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Writing relevant information on the topic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Writing a conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4	Organizing ideas		√
5	Connecting ideas		√
6	Vocabulary		
7	Grammatical structures		
8	Mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation and capitalization, etc.)		
9	Communicating the message		√
10	Planning		√
11	Revising		√
12	Other,(Please specify)		

7- In the university, did your English teachers use English or Arabic when teaching English writing? (*Please circle or underline your answer*).

15- English only

16- Arabic only

17- More English than Arabic

18- More Arabic than English

Please tick the appropriate box in front of either language in the following questions.

8- Did your teachers teach you how to plan before writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English	√	

9- Did your teacher teach you how to revise writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

10- Were you encouraged to write drafts in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

If you answered No to Q 11 for both languages, please go to Q 13.

11- If you answered yes to Q 11, how many drafts did you write in English and in Arabic at any stage of studying writing?

Language	None	One draft	Two drafts	Three drafts	More
Arabic					
English					

12- When you rewrote your writing, what sort of changes did you make?

Language	Changes in content	Changes in organisation	Changes in grammar	Changes in mechanics (i.e.	None

	(related to ideas, knowledge of the subject, and development of topic and thesis)	(How the text is divided into paragraphs and how individual ideas are connected through the use of connecting devices)	(e.g. subject-verb agreement, consistent-verb- tenses and word order).	spelling, punctuation and capitalisation)	
Arabic					
English					

13- If you haven't experienced rewriting your English writing before and were asked to revise, which of the following elements in your writing would you find difficult to revise. Please circle or underline the number to indicate level of difficulty

1 – Very difficult 2 – Difficult 3 – Neutral 4 – Easy 5 – Very easy

Revising spelling	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising capitalisation	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising punctuation	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising vocabulary	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising grammar	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5
Revising linking devices (transitions)	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5
Revising ideas	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5
Revising physical structure of writing (introduction, body paragraph/s and conclusion).	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5

Section2: Teaching Writing

14- What techniques did your teacher use to teach you writing in Arabic and English? (*Tick as many as apply.*)

No	Techniques of teaching writing in Arabic and English	Arabic	English
1	We read and imitated examples of other writers		✓
2	We re-copied examples.		✓
3	We took the title of the essay and wrote about it at home	✓	✓
4	We wrote in class.		✓
5	Teachers gave lectures about writing		✓
6	Teachers teach grammar in writing classes		✓
7	We learned how to organise writing		✓
8	We peer-assessed each other's essays.		
9	We self-assessed our written essays		
10	We wrote letters to other people.		
12	We wrote research papers.		

13	We read our papers out loud		
14	We wrote journals or diaries		
15	We brain stormed ideas about topics		
16	We wrote different drafts		
17	None of the above		

(Please write the number of the techniques stated in the above table)

Most technique used: Arabic _____3_____ English_____4_____

Second most used: Arabic _____ English_____3_____

Third most used: Arabic _____ English_____5_____

15- What are methods of organization you were taught in English?

Organisation of ideas	Answers
Three essay parts: introduction, body, and conclusion	√
Cause/ Effect; Problem/ Solution	√
Order of Importance	
Other, please specify:	

Section 3: Assessment of writing

16 -In the exam, did you write about a topic which you had written about before?

(Please circle or underline the answer to indicate your opinion)

20- Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

17 -Did your teacher provide you with a list of topics which were going to be included in the exam? (Please circle the answer to indicate your opinion)

c- Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

18 -Which things from the list below do you think your teachers emphasized when they graded your English and Arabic writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

Focus	Arabic	English
1- Beauty of language	√	
2- Clarity of main idea	√	
3- Correct grammar and spelling		√

4- Expressing your true feelings		
5- Length of paper	√	
6- Neatness and handwriting	√	√
7- Originality and imagination		
8- Organization of ideas		
9- Vocabulary		
10- Quoting experts and other sources		√
11- Using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas		
12- Other, (please specify):		
13- I don't know		

19- How did your teacher indicate an error in your writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

No	Ways of indicating errors	Arabic	English
1-	By showing where the error is and giving a clue about how to correct it		
2-	By showing the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and not paying attention to the ideas expressed		√
3-	By ignoring the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and only paying attention to the ideas expressed		
4-	By ignoring everything and only giving the final mark	√	
5-	Other (please specify):		

Section4: Please write down any comments on your learning English or Arabic writing experience (any information you think that can be useful for this project e.g., how writing in Arabic and English should be organised, differences between writing in Arabic and English, your strengths and weaknesses, etc.).

End of questionnaire

Thank you

Participant 3:

Section 1: Background information

Participant's email address: _____

Department: _____ English _____ University: __Alfatah/ Tripoli _____

Years of English learning: __4 years _____ Year of graduation: __1997 _____

1- How long have you studied writing (composition/ 'inshaa') in Arabic?

-----6-----years

2- How long have you studied writing in English?

-----4-----years

**Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your answer in the following questions.*

3- What type of schools did you attend before college?

Public School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Private School	<input type="checkbox"/>

4-When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in Arabic?

Very difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input type="checkbox"/>

5- When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in English?

Very difficult	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input type="checkbox"/>

6- If you have any difficulties in writing in Arabic and/ or English, what are these difficulties? *(Please tick as many as apply).*

No	Aspects of writing	Arabic	English
1	Writing an introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Writing relevant information on the topic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Writing a conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4	Organizing ideas		√
5	Connecting ideas		√
6	Vocabulary		√
7	Grammatical structures		√
8	Mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation and capitalization, etc.)		
9	Communicating the message		√
10	Planning		
11	Revising		√
12	Other,(Please specify)		

7- In the university, did your English teachers use English or Arabic when teaching English writing? *(Please circle or underline your answer).*

19- English only

20- Arabic only

21- More English than Arabic

22- More Arabic than English

Please tick the appropriate box in front of either language in the following questions.

8- Did your teachers teach you how to plan before writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English	√	

9- Did your teacher teach you how to revise writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

10- Were you encouraged to write drafts in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

If you answered No to Q 11 for both languages, please go to Q 13.

11- If you answered yes to Q 11, how many drafts did you write in English and in Arabic at any stage of studying writing?

Language	None	One draft	Two drafts	Three drafts	More
Arabic					
English					

12- When you rewrote your writing, what sort of changes did you make?

Language	Changes in content	Changes in organisation	Changes in grammar	Changes in mechanics (i.e.	None

	(related to ideas, knowledge of the subject, and development of topic and thesis)	(How the text is divided into paragraphs and how individual ideas are connected through the use of connecting devices)	(e.g. subject-verb agreement, consistent-verb- tenses and word order).	spelling, punctuation and capitalisation)	
Arabic					
English					

13- If you haven't experienced rewriting your English writing before and were asked to revise, which of the following elements in your writing would you find difficult to revise. Please circle or underline the number to indicate level of difficulty

1 – Very difficult 2 – Difficult 3 – Neutral 4 – Easy 5 – Very easy

Revising spelling	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5
Revising capitalisation	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising punctuation	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising vocabulary	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising grammar	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising linking devices (transitions)	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5
Revising ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Revising physical structure of writing (introduction, body paragraph/s and conclusion).	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5

Section2: Teaching Writing

14- What techniques did your teacher use to teach you writing in Arabic and English? (*Tick as many as apply.*)

No	Techniques of teaching writing in Arabic and English	Arabic	English
1	We read and imitated examples of other writers		√
2	We re-copied examples.		√
3	We took the title of the essay and wrote about it at home	√	√
4	We wrote in class.		√
5	Teachers gave lectures about writing		√
6	Teachers teach grammar in writing classes		√
7	We learned how to organise writing		√
8	We peer-assessed each other's essays.		
9	We self-assessed our written essays		
10	We wrote letters to other people.		
12	We wrote research papers.		

13	We read our papers out loud		
14	We wrote journals or diaries		
15	We brain stormed ideas about topics		
16	We wrote different drafts		
17	None of the above		

(Please write the number of the techniques stated in the above table)

Most technique used: Arabic _____3_____ English_____4_____

Second most used: Arabic _____ English_____3_____

Third most used: Arabic _____ English_____5_____

15- What are methods of organization you were taught in English?

Organisation of ideas	Answers
Three essay parts: introduction, body, and conclusion	√
Cause/ Effect; Problem/ Solution	√
Order of Importance	
Other, please specify:	

Section 3: Assessment of writing

16-In the exam, did you write about a topic which you had written about before?

(Please circle or underline the answer to indicate your opinion)

21- Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

17 -Did your teacher provide you with a list of topics which were going to be included in the exam? (Please circle the answer to indicate your opinion)

Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

18 -Which things from the list below do you think your teachers emphasized when they graded your English and Arabic writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

Focus	Arabic	English
1- Beauty of language	√	
2- Clarity of main idea	√	

3- Correct grammar and spelling		√
4- Expressing your true feelings		
5- Length of paper	√	
6- Neatness and handwriting	√	√
7- Originality and imagination		
8- Organization of ideas		
9- Vocabulary		
10- Quoting experts and other sources		√
11- Using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas		
12- Other, (please specify):		
13- I don't know		

19- How did your teacher indicate an error in your writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

No	Ways of indicating errors	Arabic	English
1-	By showing where the error is and giving a clue about how to correct it		
2-	By showing the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and not paying attention to the ideas expressed		√
3-	By ignoring the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and only paying attention to the ideas expressed		
4-	By ignoring everything and only giving the final mark	√	
5-	Other (please specify):		

Section4: Please write down any comments on your learning English or Arabic writing experience (any information you think that can be useful for this project e.g., how writing in Arabic and English should be organised, differences between writing in Arabic and English, your strengths and weaknesses, etc.).

The writing lessons for the English language students in Libya is not of high standards. This may be due to the lack of practice in pronunciation and writing. To master the English language, the students should be scheduled to speeding more time writing. They are custom to discuss topics that only students that live in Libya are aware of. However, the writing in the Arabic language is of perfect standards. Due to the fact that is not as difficult as the English language plus it our first language and the language they speak in their households.

End of questionnaire

Participant 4:

Section 1: Background information

Participant's email address: _____

Department: _____ English _____ University: __Zawya_____

Years of English learning: __10 years_____ Year of graduation: __2004_____

1- How long have you studied writing (composition/ 'inshaa') in Arabic?

-----6-----years

2- How long have you studied writing in English?

-----4-----years

****Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your answer in the following questions.***

3- What type of schools did you attend before college?

Public School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Private School	<input type="checkbox"/>

4-When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in Arabic?

Very difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5- When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in English?

Very difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input type="checkbox"/>

6- If you have any difficulties in writing in Arabic and/ or English, what are these difficulties? *(Please tick as many as apply).*

No	Aspects of writing	Arabic	English
1	Writing an introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Writing relevant information on the topic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Writing a conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4	Organizing ideas		√
5	Connecting ideas		
6	Vocabulary		√
7	Grammatical structures		
8	Mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation and capitalization, etc.)		
9	Communicating the message		
10	Planning		
11	Revising		√
12	Other,(Please specify)		

7- In the university, did your English teachers use English or Arabic when teaching English writing? *(Please circle or underline your answer).*

23- English only

24- Arabic only

25- More English than Arabic

26- More Arabic than English

Please tick the appropriate box in front of either language in the following questions.

8- Did your teachers teach you how to plan before writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

9- Did your teacher teach you how to revise writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

10- Were you encouraged to write drafts in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

If you answered No to Q 11 for both languages, please go to Q 13.

11- If you answered yes to Q 11, how many drafts did you write in English and in Arabic at any stage of studying writing?

Language	None	One draft	Two drafts	Three drafts	More
Arabic					
English					

12- When you rewrote your writing, what sort of changes did you make?

Language	Changes in content (related to	Changes in organisation (How the text	Changes in grammar (e.g.	Changes in mechanics (i.e. spelling,	None

	ideas, knowledge of the subject, and development of topic and thesis)	is divided into paragraphs and how individual ideas are connected through the use of connecting devices)	subject-verb agreement, consistent-verb- tenses and word order).	punctuation and capitalisation)	
Arabic					
English					

13- If you haven't experienced rewriting your English writing before and were asked to revise, which of the following elements in your writing would you find difficult to revise. Please circle or underline the number to indicate level of difficulty

1 – Very difficult 2 – Difficult 3 – Neutral 4 – Easy 5 – Very easy

Revising spelling	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising capitalisation	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising punctuation	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising vocabulary	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising grammar	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5
Revising linking devices (transitions)	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5
Revising ideas	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5
Revising physical structure of writing (introduction, body paragraph/s and conclusion).	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5

Section2: Teaching Writing

14- What techniques did your teacher use to teach you writing in Arabic and English? (*Tick as many as apply.*)

No	Techniques of teaching writing in Arabic and English	Arabic	English
1	We read and imitated examples of other writers		
2	We re-copied examples.		√
3	We took the title of the essay and wrote about it at home	√	√
4	We wrote in class.		√
5	Teachers gave lectures about writing		√
6	Teachers teach grammar in writing classes		√
7	We learned how to organise writing		√
8	We peer-assessed each other's essays.		
9	We self-assessed our written essays		
10	We wrote letters to other people.		
12	We wrote research papers.		
13	We read our papers out loud		

14	We wrote journals or diaries		
15	We brain stormed ideas about topics	√	√
16	We wrote different drafts		
17	None of the above		

(Please write the number of the techniques stated in the above table)

Most technique used: Arabic _____3_____ English_____4_____

Second most used: Arabic _____15_____ English_____7_____

Third most used: Arabic _____ English_____6_____

15- What are methods of organization you were taught in English?

Organisation of ideas	Answers
Three essay parts: introduction, body, and conclusion	√
Cause/ Effect; Problem/ Solution	
Order of Importance	
Other, please specify:	

Section 3: Assessment of writing

16 -In the exam, did you write about a topic which you had written about before?

(Please circle or underline the answer to indicate your opinion)

Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

17 -Did your teacher provide you with a list of topics which were going to be included in the exam? (Please circle the answer to indicate your opinion)

d- Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

18 -Which things from the list below do you think your teachers emphasized when they graded your English and Arabic writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

Focus	Arabic	English
1- Beauty of language	√	
2- Clarity of main idea	√	
3- Correct grammar and spelling		√

4- Expressing your true feelings		
5- Length of paper	√	√
6- Neatness and handwriting	√	
7- Originality and imagination		
8- Organization of ideas		√
9- Vocabulary		
10- Quoting experts and other sources		√
11- Using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas		
12- Other, (please specify):		
13- I don't know		

19- How did your teacher indicate an error in your writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

No	Ways of indicating errors	Arabic	English
1-	By showing where the error is and giving a clue about how to correct it		
2-	By showing the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and not paying attention to the ideas expressed	√	
3-	By ignoring the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and only paying attention to the ideas expressed		
4-	By ignoring everything and only giving the final mark	√	√
5-	Other (please specify):		

Section4: Please write down any comments on your learning English or Arabic writing experience (any information you think that can be useful for this project e.g., how writing in Arabic and English should be organised, differences between writing in Arabic and English, your strengths and weaknesses, etc.).

End of questionnaire

Thank you

Participant 5:

Section 1: Background information

Participant's email address: _____

Department: _____ English _____ University: __Alfatah/ Tripoli _____

Years of English learning: __4 years _____ Year of graduation: __1997 _____

3- How long have you studied writing (composition/ 'inshaa') in Arabic?

-----6-----years

4- How long have you studied writing in English?

-----4-----years

**Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your answer in the following questions.*

3- What type of schools did you attend before college?

Public School	√
Private School	

4-When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in Arabic?

Very difficult	
Difficult	
Neutral	
Easy	√
Very easy	

5- When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in English?

Very difficult	√
Difficult	
Neutral	
Easy	
Very easy	

6- If you have any difficulties in writing in Arabic and/ or English, what are these difficulties? *(Please tick as many as apply).*

No	Aspects of writing	Arabic	English
1	Writing an introduction		
2	Writing relevant information on the topic		√
3	Writing a conclusion		

4	Organizing ideas		√
5	Connecting ideas		√
6	Vocabulary		√
7	Grammatical structures		√
8	Mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation and capitalization, etc.)		
9	Communicating the message		√
10	Planning		
11	Revising		√
12	Other,(Please specify)		

7- In the university, did your English teachers use English or Arabic when teaching English writing? *(Please circle or underline your answer).*

19 English only

20 Arabic only

21 More English than Arabic

22 More Arabic than English

Please tick the appropriate box in front of either language in the following questions.

8- Did your teachers teach you how to plan before writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English	√	

9- Did your teacher teach you how to revise writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

10- Were you encouraged to write drafts in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

If you answered No to Q 11 for both languages, please go to Q 13.

11- If you answered yes to Q 11, how many drafts did you write in English and in Arabic at any stage of studying writing?

Language	None	One draft	Two drafts	Three drafts	More
Arabic					
English					

12- When you rewrote your writing, what sort of changes did you make?

Language	Changes in content	Changes in organisation	Changes in grammar	Changes in mechanics (i.e.	None

	(related to ideas, knowledge of the subject, and development of topic and thesis)	(How the text is divided into paragraphs and how individual ideas are connected through the use of connecting devices)	(e.g. subject-verb agreement, consistent-verb- tenses and word order).	spelling, punctuation and capitalisation)	
Arabic					
English					

13- If you haven't experienced rewriting your English writing before and were asked to revise, which of the following elements in your writing would you find difficult to revise. Please circle or underline the number to indicate level of difficulty

1 – Very difficult 2 – Difficult 3 – Neutral 4 – Easy 5 – Very easy

Revising spelling	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5
Revising capitalisation	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising punctuation	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising vocabulary	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising grammar	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5
Revising linking devices (transitions)	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5
Revising ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Revising physical structure of writing (introduction, body paragraph/s and conclusion).	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5

Section2: Teaching Writing

14- What techniques did your teacher use to teach you writing in Arabic and English? (*Tick as many as apply.*)

No	Techniques of teaching writing in Arabic and English	Arabic	English
1	We read and imitated examples of other writers		√
2	We re-copied examples.		√
3	We took the title of the essay and wrote about it at home	√	√
4	We wrote in class.		√
5	Teachers gave lectures about writing		√
6	Teachers teach grammar in writing classes		√
7	We learned how to organise writing		√
8	We peer-assessed each other's essays.		
9	We self-assessed our written essays		
10	We wrote letters to other people.		
12	We wrote research papers.		

13	We read our papers out loud		
14	We wrote journals or diaries		
15	We brain stormed ideas about topics		
16	We wrote different drafts		
17	None of the above		

(Please write the number of the techniques stated in the above table)

Most technique used: Arabic _____3_____ English_____4_____

Second most used: Arabic _____ English_____3_____

Third most used: Arabic _____ English_____5_____

15- What are methods of organization you were taught in English?

Organisation of ideas	Answers
Three essay parts: introduction, body, and conclusion	√
Cause/ Effect; Problem/ Solution	√
Order of Importance	
Other, please specify:	

Section 3: Assessment of writing

16-In the exam, did you write about a topic which you had written about before?

(Please circle or underline the answer to indicate your opinion)

23 Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

19 -Did your teacher provide you with a list of topics which were going to be included in the exam? (Please circle the answer to indicate your opinion)

Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

20 -Which things from the list below do you think your teachers emphasized when they graded your English and Arabic writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

Focus	Arabic	English
1- Beauty of language	√	
2- Clarity of main idea	√	
3- Correct grammar and spelling		√
4- Expressing your true feelings		
5- Length of paper	√	
6- Neatness and handwriting	√	√
7- Originality and imagination		
8- Organization of ideas		
9- Vocabulary		
10- Quoting experts and other sources		√
11- Using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas		
12- Other, (please specify):		
13- I don't know		

19- How did your teacher indicate an error in your writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

No	Ways of indicating errors	Arabic	English
1-	By showing where the error is and giving a clue about how to correct it		
2-	By showing the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and not paying attention to the ideas expressed		√
3-	By ignoring the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and only paying attention to the ideas expressed		
4-	By ignoring everything and only giving the final mark	√	
5-	Other (please specify):		

Section4: Please write down any comments on your learning English or Arabic writing experience (any information you think that can be useful for this project e.g., how writing in Arabic and English should be organised, differences between writing in Arabic and English, your strengths and weaknesses, etc.).

End of questionnaire

Thank you

Participant 6:

Section 1: Background information

Participant's email address: _____

Department: _____ English _____ University: __Subrata_____

Years of English learning: __10 years_____ Year of graduation: __2008_____

1- How long have you studied writing (composition/ 'inshaa') in Arabic?

-----6-----years

2- How long have you studied writing in English?

-----4-----years

****Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your answer in the following questions.***

3- What type of schools did you attend before college?

Public School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Private School	<input type="checkbox"/>

4-When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in Arabic?

Very difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input type="checkbox"/>

27- When you were in school/college, how did you find writing in English?

Very difficult	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very easy	<input type="checkbox"/>

28- If you have any difficulties in writing in Arabic and/ or English, what are these difficulties? *(Please tick as many as apply).*

No	Aspects of writing	Arabic	English
1	Writing an introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Writing relevant information on the topic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Writing a conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4	Organizing ideas		√
5	Connecting ideas		√
6	Vocabulary		
7	Grammatical structures		
8	Mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation and capitalization, etc.)		
9	Communicating the message		√
10	Planning		√
11	Revising		√
12	Other,(Please specify)		

29- In the university, did your English teachers use English or Arabic when teaching English writing? (*Please circle or underline your answer*).

30- English only

31- Arabic only

32- More English than Arabic

33- More Arabic than English

Please tick the appropriate box in front of either language in the following questions.

34- Did your teachers teach you how to plan before writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

35- Did your teacher teach you how to revise writing in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

36- Were you encouraged to write drafts in Arabic and English?

Language	Yes	No
Arabic		√
English		√

If you answered No to Q 11 for both languages, please go to Q 13.

37- If you answered yes to Q 11, how many drafts did you write in English and in Arabic at any stage of studying writing?

Language	None	One draft	Two drafts	Three drafts	More
Arabic					
English					

38- When you rewrote your writing, what sort of changes did you make?

Language	Changes in content	Changes in organisation	Changes in grammar	Changes in mechanics (i.e.	None

	(related to ideas, knowledge of the subject, and development of topic and thesis)	(How the text is divided into paragraphs and how individual ideas are connected through the use of connecting devices)	(e.g. subject-verb agreement, consistent-verb- tenses and word order).	spelling, punctuation and capitalisation)	
Arabic					
English					

39- If you haven't experienced rewriting your English writing before and were asked to revise, which of the following elements in your writing would you find difficult to revise. Please circle or underline the number to indicate level of difficulty

1 – Very difficult 2 – Difficult 3 – Neutral 4 – Easy 5 – Very easy

Revising spelling	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising capitalisation	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
Revising punctuation	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5
Revising vocabulary	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5
Revising grammar	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5
Revising linking devices (transitions)	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5
Revising ideas	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5
Revising physical structure of writing (introduction, body paragraph/s and conclusion).	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5

Section2: Teaching Writing

40- What techniques did your teacher use to teach you writing in Arabic and English? (*Tick as many as apply.*)

No	Techniques of teaching writing in Arabic and English	Arabic	English
1	We read and imitated examples of other writers		
2	We re-copied examples.		√
3	We took the title of the essay and wrote about it at home	√	√
4	We wrote in class.	√	√
5	Teachers gave lectures about writing		
6	Teachers teach grammar in writing classes		√
7	We learned how to organise writing		√
8	We peer-assessed each other's essays.		
9	We self-assessed our written essays		
10	We wrote letters to other people.		
12	We wrote research papers.		

13	We read our papers out loud		
14	We wrote journals or diaries		
15	We brain stormed ideas about topics	√	
16	We wrote different drafts		
17	None of the above		

(Please write the number of the techniques stated in the above table)

Most technique used: Arabic _____3_____ English_____3_____

Second most used: Arabic _____4_____ English_____6_____

Third most used: Arabic _____ English_____4_____

15- What are methods of organization you were taught in English?

Organisation of ideas	Answers
Three essay parts: introduction, body, and conclusion	√
Cause/ Effect; Problem/ Solution	√
Order of Importance	
Other, please specify:	

Section 3: Assessment of writing

16-In the exam, did you write about a topic which you had written about before?

(Please circle or underline the answer to indicate your opinion)

Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

17-Did your teacher provide you with a list of topics which were going to be included in the exam? (Please circle the answer to indicate your opinion)

e- Always b- Often c- Sometimes d- Rarely e- Never

18-Which things from the list below do you think your teachers emphasized when they graded your English and Arabic writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

Focus	Arabic	English
1- Beauty of language	√	
2- Clarity of main idea	√	
3- Correct grammar and spelling		√

4- Expressing your true feelings		
5- Length of paper	√	√
6- Neatness and handwriting	√	
7- Originality and imagination		
8- Organization of ideas		√
9- Vocabulary		
10- Quoting experts and other sources		√
11- Using good examples and details to illustrate main ideas		
12- Other, (please specify):		
13- I don't know		

19- How did your teacher indicate an error in your writing? (Tick as many as apply.)

No	Ways of indicating errors	Arabic	English
1-	By showing where the error is and giving a clue about how to correct it		
2-	By showing the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and not paying attention to the ideas expressed		√
3-	By ignoring the errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation...etc. and only paying attention to the ideas expressed		
4-	By ignoring everything and only giving the final mark	√	√
5-	Other (please specify):		

Section4: Please write down any comments on your learning English or Arabic writing experience (any information you think that can be useful for this project e.g., how writing in Arabic and English should be organised, differences between writing in Arabic and English, your strengths and weaknesses, etc.).

End of questionnaire

Thank you

Appendix 21: Samples of experimental group essays

Experimental group (top 10)

Essay 1 (a) revised draft

Differences between living in a small town and living in a big city

This essay shall discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both living in a big city and living in a small town. After reading it you shall be able to decide whether you want to live in a city or town.

Firstly we shall write about the town and its advantages as well as disadvantages. In a town the people are friendly kind loving and humble. The air is clean the trees are everywhere though to the small numbers of cars and factories. Also affording to live in a town is easier than in a city. On the other hand there are no good chances of finding good education, treatment, or even employment in a town.

Secondly we shall discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living in a big city. In a big city the chance of having a good education, treatment or employment is much larger or greater than in a town. Also there are lots of transportation methods in a big city comparing to a town. On the other hand, living in a big city has more hazards on the health due to the increase in the number of cars as well as factories, which means more pollution. In addition people in a big city are not as friendly as people in a town so the social life is more limited to friends and family. Furthermore the life expenses are more in a city.

As a conclusion, one has got to be really careful when deciding to live in a town or a city and should take the advantages as well as the disadvantages into consideration but personally, I prefer to live in a town more than to live in a city.

Essay 1 (b) revised draft

Differences between living in a small town and living in a big city

There are many differences between the lifestyles of people that live in a city and people that live in a town. This essay shall discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both living in a big city and living in a small town. After reading it you shall have more information on what it is like to live in both places and be able to decide whether you prefer to live in a city or town. The advantages and disadvantages I shall discuss regarding social life, fresh air, living costs, education, hospitals and job opportunities.

Firstly I will introduce the advantages and disadvantages of life in a small town. In a town there are a small number of people living close together so the people have good relationships with each other and are kind, friendly and humble. The air is very clean and fresh due to the small number of cars and factories and there are many beautiful trees and plants. It is much easier to be able to afford to live in a small town as the cost of living is low and everything is not too expensive. However the main disadvantage to living in a small town is there is not a good chance of finding very good education and employment opportunities.

Secondly we shall discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living in a big city. In a big city there are much better opportunities in terms of finding a good education as there are many good schools and universities to attend. There is better access to good medical treatment through better hospitals and doctors and there are many good job opportunities available. The methods of transport through a big a city are also better than a small town, the roads are bigger, there are more cars and much better public transport. However these advantages can also have a negative side. The traffic and higher number of factories create more health hazards from the increased pollution they cause. The large number of people living in a big city can also mean people are not as friendly and a good social life can be more difficult to achieve. Finally, life in a big city is much more expensive than in a small town.

In conclusion I believe that one should be very careful when deciding whether to live in a city or a town and should consider all of the advantages and disadvantages before making a

decision. I, personally, would prefer to live in a small town as I feel it is more important to have a healthy and quiet living environment with a good social life.

Essay 2(a) first draft

Differences between living in a big city or a small town

Differences between living in a big city or a small town

What are the main differences in living in a small town and a big city? Living in a big city is a good thing in many ways, but it has its disadvantages in terms of cost of living and pollution. On the other hand living in a small town can be seen as a comfortable thing but there are many things you would miss if you previously had lived in a big city.

If you as a person prefer quietness, fresh air and a busy social life with your neighbours and relatives then a small town is the most suitable option for you. These advantages to living in a small town are not available to you in the big city which is busy, noisy and filled with polluted air from many cars and factories. A small town is more comfortable and has less traffic although the public transport is better in a big city it is still available in the small town. A small town is especially good to raise children, the environment is more suited to this as there are less destructive and negative things around. It is also an advantage to raise children in a small town because the cost of living is much less. However, there are many more employment opportunities available in a big city and there are much better services such as good schools and good hospitals and the better teachers and doctors prefer to live in the city rather than a small town.

The answer to the question which is a better place to live is difficult to find. Each one has its own advantages and disadvantages and what I may consider a disadvantage another person may consider a good thing. The differences I have mentioned are only some of the huge differences in the style of living in a city or a town and it is up to each person to decide which is best for them.

Essay 2(b) revised draft

Differences between living in a big city or a small town

What are the main differences in living in a small town and a big city? Living in a big city is a good thing in many ways, but it has its disadvantages in terms of cost of living and pollution. On the other hand living in a small town can be seen as a comfortable thing but there are many things you would miss if you previously had lived in a big city.

If you as a person prefer quietness, fresh air and a busy social life with your neighbours and relatives then a small town is the most suitable option for you. These advantages to living in a small town are not available to you in the big city which is busy, noisy and filled with polluted air from many cars and factories. In addition, A small town is more comfortable and has less traffic although the public transport is better in a big city it is still available in the small town. A small town is especially good to raise children, the environment is more suited to this as there are less destructive and negative things around. It is also an advantage to raise children in a small town because the cost of living is much less. However, there are many more employment opportunities available in a big city and there are much better services such as good schools and good hospitals and the better teachers and doctors prefer to live in the city rather than a small town.

The answer to the question which is a better place to live is difficult to find. Each one has its own advantages and disadvantages and what I may consider a disadvantage another person may consider a good thing. The differences I have mentioned are only some of the huge differences in the style of living in a city or a town and it is up to each person to decide which is best for them.

Essay 3 (a) first draft

Differences between living in a big city or a small town

There are many advantages and disadvantages of living in a big city as well as in a small town. One can choose the place s/he lives in depending on the air s/he can stand.

The points that should be taken into consideration when somebody comes to decide where he should live are several. For instance, the lifestyle he used to live, his material condition, his job, age, health, character etc.

Living in a big city has both positive and negative sides. Among the positive things, that one can enjoy his time more in a city, due to the enormous entertaining places. There are more employment opportunities, good schools and hospitals. There is also a wideness in public transportation, so one can move from place to another easily.

While the bad sides of living in a city are also many. For example, there is a reduction in social relationships and increasing in air pollution because of the traffic jam, industrial factories and overcrowding. The life in a city is much costly and exacting.

The life in a small town has also good and bad sides. The rural life is much easier, simpler and cheaper than that of the city. People who lives in small towns are more friendly. Towns have more beautiful natural landscapes and fresh air. However, one who lives there may need many things that are not available in a town, such as, good education, high developed hospitals and employment chances.

In conclusion, due to this advantages and disadvantages, one may find some difficulties in deciding the best and most appropriate place to live in.

Essay 3 (b) revised draft

Differences between living in a big city or a small town

There are many advantages and disadvantages of living in a big city as well as in a small town. One can choose the place s/he lives in depending on the air s/he can stand. The points that should be taken into consideration when somebody comes to decide where he should live are several. For instance, the lifestyle he used to live, his material condition, his job, age, health, character etc.

Living in a big city has both positive and negative sides. Among the positive things, that one can enjoy his time more in a city, due to the enormous entertaining places. There are more employment opportunities, good schools and hospitals. There is also a wideness in public transportation, so one can move from place to another easily. Besides the good sides, the bad sides of living in a city are also many. For example, there is a reduction in social relationships and increasing in air pollution because of the traffic jam, industrial factories and overcrowding. The life in a city is also much costly and exacting.

The life in a small town has also good and bad sides. The rural life is much easier, simpler and cheaper than that of the city. People Live in small towns are more friendly. Towns have more beautiful natural landscapes and fresh air. However, one who lives there may need many things that are not available in a town, such as, good education, high developed hospitals and employment chances.

In conclusion, due to this advantages and disadvantages, one may find some difficulties in deciding the best and most appropriate place to live in.

Essay 4 (a) first draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many advantages and disadvantages of Living in a big city or a small town. Most of people specially the teenagers prefer to live in a big city but others like olders Like the Life in a small town. Moreover; The difference between the Living in a big city and the living in a small town results difference in peopl's habits, behaviours and Life system.

First to mention, the advantages and disadvantages of living in a big city. The big city include different kinds of people related to different regions so the social relationships between them will be v. bad. The neighbours and the students in schools for example will not be friendly with each other because there will be no harmony in their habits and behaviours. The fresh and healthy air will not found in the big city because of the traffic, factories etc pollution. It affects badly the health. Because of the big city mostly is the place of tourism and foreigners, the life will be more expensive and costly. On the other hand, The big city also characterized by the existence/entity of too much employment opportunities because of the large number of companies, factories. In addition: There are different kinds of public transportation in the big city. They solves a big problem for those who doesn't own cars. They are also cheap and available every where. Finally, the education in the big city is better than in the small town since the all of experts, doctors, profisionals choose to teach in the big city affect on that.

Second, to mention the advantages and disadvantages of living in a small town. The social life is very good. The people is so friendly and they always in contact with each other. The fresh air and the beautiful nature is v.nice. The people of small town usually more healthy than people of big city because of the purity of air and there is no traffic and public transportation, so the pollution is not found there. The life in a small town doesn't cost too much. The prices are reasonable and sauitable for all people. However; There is a big problem in employment opportunities. It is v difficult to find a job in the small town. The schools and the universities are not good because of the weakness of possibilities.

In the conclusion, there is a balance between the life in a big city and a small town, because of the different advantages and disadvantages of both. That is why, some people prefer to live in a big city and others Like the life of a small town.

Essay 4 (b) revised draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many advantages and disadvantages to living in a big city as opposed to a small town. Living in a big city or a small town will have different results on people's habits, behavior and way of life. I think that most people, particularly teenagers would prefer to live in a big city whereas older people would prefer to live in a small town.

Firstly I would like to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living in a big city. In a big city there are many different types of people from different regions and sometimes relationships between them can be difficult. For example, neighbours and students will not be friendly with each other because there is no harmony between their habits and behavior. Another disadvantage of living in a big city is the lack of fresh and healthy air because of pollution from traffic and factories. This has a negative effect on health, also in a big city there tends to be many visitors from tourism, it can be too busy and life can be expensive. However, the advantages of living in a big city come from the great opportunities for employment from the high numbers of companies and factories. Transport is easier in a big city, there is a lot of different types of public transport so not everyone needs a car. Finally, education in a big city is much better than in a small town as there are many schools and colleges and many experts, doctors and professionals are available to teach students.

Secondly I would like to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living in a small town. I think the social life in a small town is much better as the people are more friendly and have more contact with each other. The environment is better too because of the fresh air and beautiful nature that is all around. The fresh air also makes the people that live in a small town have better health, there is less pollution as there is less traffic and less public transport. The final advantage of living in a small town is the cost of living, it is much cheaper to live happily in a small town than a big city. The main disadvantage of living in a small town, however, is the lack of opportunity in employment. It is very difficult to find a good job and there are less schools and universities with expert teachers.

In conclusion, there are big differences in living in both places. There are advantages and disadvantages in both types of living and the choice of which is better depends on the person.

This is why some people prefer the life in a small town whilst others choose the life in a big city.

Essay 5 (a) first draft

Differences between living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many differ between village and town in a social life in a village is better than town and relationships between fimalies and neighbours is site good. Everybody know any body in the village. But in the town there are many flats and buildings and some times neighbours don't know them. However I think living in a small a small city is best. In addition fresh air in the village is nice and cool and you feel confortaball many people live in the town come to village in holidays and in weekends because think we can smell fresh air and confortaball from work.

Traffic pollution in a village there is not traffic because there are a number of cars but in a town there are many cars, buses, lorries so there many traffic but in a pollution in a town so many pollution from factories, gas house. But in a village there is much pollution.

In quietness living in a town so noise there many schools, houses, buildings, factories, shops, supermarkets and much people live there because any thing you want it you can find it but in a village I think is very quiet and shining and very confortaball.

Cost of living in the town you cant do fresh milk or bread every think you want you can buy it from any supermarket but in a village every family do there food in a home from farmer.

In addition in the town there are a lot of schools, hospitals, buildings, employment but in a village there are houses with farmers animals, sand, sun, fresh air.

My opinion about living in town or village I think living in a town there are many advantages and disadvantages like work and shopping and everything you can find it in a town but in a village is fresh air smell, live, people is very lovely.

Essay 5 (b) revised draft

Differences between living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many differences between village and town in a social life in a village is better than town and relationships between families and neighbours are site good. Everybody knows anybody in the village. But in the town there are many flats and buildings and sometimes neighbours don't know them. However I think living in a small city is best. In addition fresh air in the village is nice and cool and you feel comfortable many people live in the town come to village in holidays and in weekends because think we can smell fresh air and comfortable from work.

Traffic pollution in a village there is not traffic because there are a number of cars but in a town there are many cars, buses, lorries so there many traffic but in a pollution in a town so many pollution from factories, gas house. But in a village there is much pollution.

In quietness living in a town so noise there many schools, houses, buildings, factories, shops, supermarkets and much people live there because anything you want it you can find it but in a village I think is very quiet and shining and very comfortable.

Cost of living in the town you can't do fresh milk or bread everything you want you can buy it from any supermarket but in a village every family do there food in a home from farm.

In addition in the town there are a lot of schools, hospitals, buildings, employment but in a village there are houses with farmers animals, sand, sun, fresh air.

My opinion about living in town or village I think living in a town there are many advantages and disadvantages like work and shopping and everything you can find it in a town but in a village is fresh air smell, live, people is very lovely.

Essay 6 (a) first draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

Living in a big city is almost different in living in small town, of course there are some advantages and difficulties between living in each. Many people like to live in a town for some reasons and others like the city for other reasons. Of course every one have to follow his needs and desires and that is mainly supported by the place they live in or they should live in to find the best opportunity for good life.

Living in a city filled with movement has many good qualities, for instance, its easy to find a job in many places such as companies, restaurants, offices, schools and many other places such as companies, restaurants, offices, schools and many other places contrasting with living in a town where the ability to find such a job is really difficult in the absence of these places and economic business activity, the only business which can find in towns in first place is farming, of course because of the huge areas of empty land. Other point we can see the diffirence between town and city through it is intensity of population in city is more than in town, which cause the noisy movement all the time in city, but we always find quietness in town which make the town an interest for many people lived in city. Because of that much traffic, there are many ways for trasportstions, taxies, trains, buses where the transport in towns still primitive in using animals like horses or bikes also.

No alignment to show qualities in living in a city or living in a town, each one of them has its advantages and disadvantages, with the existence of these diffirences any one can choose where to live by following his needs and where to find his calmness, these differences don't make living in city better than town or opposite.

Essay 6 (b) revised draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

Living in a big city is almost different in living in small town; of course there are some advantages and difficulties between living in each place. Many people like to live in a town for some reasons and others like the city for other reasons. Of course everyone have to follow his needs and desires and that is mainly supported by the place they live in or they should live in to find the best opportunity for good life. In this essay, I am going to highlight some of the differences between the living in the two places city and town.

Living in a city filled with movement has many good qualities, for instance, it's easy to find a job in many places such as companies, restaurants, offices, schools and many other places contrasting with living in a town where the ability to find such a job is really difficult in the absence of these places and economic business activity, the only business which can find in towns in first place is farming, of course because of the huge areas of empty land. Other point, we can see the difference between town and city through it is intensity of population in city is more than in town, which cause the noisy movement all the time in city, but we always find quietness in town which makes the town an interesting place for many people lived in city. Because of that much traffic, there are many ways for transportations, taxies, trains, buses where the transportations in towns still primitive in using animals like horses or bikes also.

Finally, no alignment to show qualities in living in a city or living in a town, each one of them has its advantages and disadvantages, with the existence of these differences anyone can choose where to live by following his needs and where to find his calmness. These differences don't make living in city better than town or opposite.

Essay 7 (a) first draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many differences between the life in a city and the life in the town. Most people don't realise the difference until they see it them selves. When looking at these differences, I realised that there's many differences between The city and a small town. I've experienced both when I was young, I used to live in town, then moved into the city.

I used to live in a small town where you'll find it the best Place to live. There you'll find a group of houses, shops, schools etc. its bigger than a village but smaller than a city. But a city it's known a very large town. Therefore the differences between these town are that a small town is very cheap in renting houses, buying clothes and in its shops, but the city is very expensive in various ways, in shopping, the food, and the cost of living. Although the town is very quete where as the city is very crowded noisy and has a lot of Traffic Jam, In the city its not always you find the fresh air because of the smell of petrol, rubbish and the dirty water in the street. But a small town is very clean well sometimes clean, and the fresh air you smell in the morning. Pople are very rude in the city by the way they speak, treat people and behaive where as the town is Full of nice people no one talks to you, they all go their own way, most of them are good and bad in the city and they don't have manner's. The city has a lot of public transport that's why the roads are very busy. The schools are everywhere and the hospitals are available but they are very busy and packed in the city, where a small town only has a couple of school's and towns.

Looking at these differences, I think living in a small town is better, but some people think the city is better. It doesn't matter, well now we understand what differences we made, and one day I would like to go back to the piecful small town.

Experimental group (top 10)

Essay 7 (b) revised draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many differences between the life in a city and the life in the town. Most people don't realise these differences until they see it themselves. When looking at these differences, I realised that there are many differences between living in a city or a town. I've experienced both when I was young; I used to live in town, and then moved into the city. From my own experience, I am going to write about some of these differences.

I used to live in a small town where you-- find it the best Place to live. There you'll find a group of houses, shops, schools etc. it's bigger than a village but smaller than a city. But a city it's known a very large town. Therefore, the differences between these two are that a small town is very cheap in renting houses, buying clothes and in its shops, but the city is very expensive in various ways, in shopping, the food, and the cost of living. Although the town is very quiet whereas the city is very crowded, noisy and has a lot of Traffic Jam. In the city it's not always you find the fresh air because of the smell of petrol, rubbish and the dirty water in the streets. But a small town is very clean well sometimes clean, and the fresh air you smell in the morning. People are very rude in the city by the way they speak, treat people and behave whereas the town is Full of nice people no one talks to you, they all go their own way, most of them are good and bad in the city and they don't have manner's. The city has a lot of public transport that's why the roads are very busy. The schools are everywhere and the hospitals are available but they are very busy and packed in the city, whereas a small town only has a couple of schools and usually one small hospital.

In conclusion, by looking at these differences, I think living in a small town is better, but some people think the city is better. It doesn't matter, well now we understand what differences we made, and one day I would like to go back to the peaceful small town where I used to live.

Essay 8 (a) first draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

The different between living in a big city or a small town has many aspects. Socially and economicly, on this essay I would like to discuss some of it. So I focuse on three points: social life, education and health.

If we take social life in setten way we can see that life in the city has many disadvantages wher people live in there own no ponting to their families, while in the small twons they are so connactid to each other, and that of course baised on other thing like, the daily busy life and the spreaded living houses and so on..... On the other hand life on city can bring many advantages education and health care, where we can find different choices with more qualification, not like the small twon the choices are too limited.

However, life in bowth city and town the end are kind of living depend on the persones personality and ambitious.

Essay 8 (b) revised draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

The difference between living in a big city or a small town has many aspects; socially and economically. On this essay, I would like to discuss some of them. So, I focus on three points: social life, education and health.

If we take social life in certain way we can see that life in the city has many disadvantages where people live in their own no pointing to their families, while in the small towns they are so connected to each other, and that of course based on other thing like, the daily busy life and the spreaded living houses and so on..... On the other hand, life in city can bring many advantages such as education and health care, where we can find different choices with more qualification, not like the small town the choices are too limited.

However, life in both city and town at the end are kind of living depend on the person's personality and ambitious.

Essay 9 (a) first draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many differences between city and town and The difference is very clear between us and some of people likes living in city some likes living in small town.

For the social life people in city do not have social life every body busy in his work and in his family and small town people are have social life, and every one known the others, small town have fresh air whereas the big city is very crowded by cars and don't have fresh air, the small town is quite during the city is very noisy and don't comfortable in for living, cost of living in big city is so expensive during the small town the costs is some of cheap and some of expensive and every one can bought. You can get work in big city easily because the chances of working more but in small town from difficult find the work.

In the city the education is very advancing and there are many schools in the city, during the small town don't have many school and teacher and education is difficult for the student.

During your in city and wanting to travelling from place to place you can find many transport like taxi, train during the small your difficult finding transport. Finally I can say there are many advantage and disadvantage in city and town and for me I like living in the big city because you can get any thing wanting and every thing invisible.

I wish every one are happy where you live.

Essay 9 (b) revised draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many differences between city and town and the difference is very clear between us and some of people like living in city and some like living in small town. In this essay, I am going to explain some of these differences such as social life, fresh air, cost of living, job opportunities, education and transportation.

For the social life people in city are not have social life evebody busy in his work and in his family and small town people are have social life, and every one known the others, small town has fresh air whereas the big city is very crowded by cars and doesn't have fresh air, the small town is quite while the city is very noisy and don't comfortabal in for living, cost of living in big city is so expensive while the small town the cost is some of cheap and some of expensive and every one can bought. You can get work in big city easily because the chances of working more but in small town from difficult find the work. Also, in the city the education is very advancing and there are many schools in the city, while the small towns don't have many schools and teachers and education is difficult for the student. In addition, while you're in city and wanting to travelling from place to place you can find many transport like taxi, train while the small you're difficult finding transport.

Finally, I can say there are many advantage and disadvantage in city and town. And for me I like living in the big city because you can get anything wanting and everything invisible. I wish everyone are happy where you live.

Essay 10 (a) first draft

The Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

The small town is better than a big city. Although is more beautiful and every thing you need will be in this city and also have good scools and good hospitals and both of them have advantages and disadvantages.

Some of people don't like the big city because there's no relationships so much between the neighbours as a small town, because a small town is so connected with together and also so fresh air without pollution from traffic cars and the people. The big city have good schools so that some of the people send their sons and daughters to big city to study it and also The big city have good hospitals the sick people that live in a town go to a city to cure. Many of people that live in a city is more rich than the peoplelive in a town because they have a job not as a town don't have employment opportunities. The big city have so much shops and supermarkets it may be expensive but so beautiful.

In a big city available public transports at any time but in town don't available public transport at any time.

Both of them have advantages and disadvantages. The big city have advantages in employment opportunities and good schools and good hospitals. Although that the town is better than big city in social life and fresh air and cheap.

Essay 10 (b) revised draft

The Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many differences between living in a city and in town. For me living in a small town is better than living a big city. Although city is more beautiful and everything you need will be in the city and also has good schools and good hospitals and both of them have advantages and disadvantages. They also differ in many things such as social relationships, pollution, transportation and employment opportunities.

Some of people don't like the big city because there's no relationships so much between the neighbours as a small town, because a small town is so connected with together and also so fresh air without pollution from traffic cars and the people. The big city has good schools so that some of the people send their sons and daughters to big city to study. And also, the big city has good hospitals. This makes the sick people that live in a town go to a city to cure. Many of people that live in a city are more rich than the people live in a town because they have a job not as a town don't have employment opportunities. The big city has so much shops and supermarkets it may be expensive but so beautiful. Also, in a big city you can find public transports available at any time but in town doesn't have available public transport at any time.

Finally, both of them have advantages and disadvantages. The big city has advantages in transportations, shops employment opportunities and good schools and good hospitals. Although that the town is better than big city in social life and fresh air and cheap.

Appendix 22: Samples of control group essays²

Control group (top10)

Essay 1 (a) first draft

Differences between living in a big city or a small town

Choosing the best place to live can often be a very difficult decision. Each place has some good points and some bad points and there are many advantages and disadvantages in living in a big city or a small town that should be considered. The differences come from the social life, opportunities, facilities and the living environment.

Living in a big city has many benefits which will help you live in a more comfortable way, there are lots of nice shops to buy all things and many different things for entertainment. There are many opportunities for good jobs and your children can study in good schools and everyone has access to good hospitals. But like anything living in a big city does have its disadvantages that can have a negative effect on your lifestyle and your health. One of these disadvantages is the pollution from traffic which can cause disease and also can be very dangerous. In a big city the air is never fresh and the traffic is always loud.

On the other hand, living in a small town has the kind of benefits that can make you very happy and also very healthy. There is no traffic or pollution to cause problems and the fresh air will protect your lungs from diseases. However even in a nice small town there can be some disadvantages that can make life difficult. It is much harder to find good employment opportunities and sometimes small towns do not have good schools or hospital facilities.

Therefore choosing a suitable place to live can become a very difficult choice. Each place has advantages and disadvantages in health and opportunities. I believe the place that allows you to live in a healthy way is the best place.

² It is important to note here that only 3 students made changes to their essays. Therefore, I did not provide the revised drafts for most of the students' writing in the control group as the returned draft is an exact copy of the first draft and there are no changes whatsoever.

Essay 2 (a) first draft

Differences between living in a big city or a small town.

Living in a city or a town has many differences. Deciding which place to live in is not an easy decision. This is because there are many differences to the way of living in both places. The differences are in each aspect of life. There are differences in education, hospitals, food, job opportunities, means of transportations, social relationships and fresh air. Most differences which people should take into consideration are education, availability of hospitals and relationships. These last three, I will discuss in this essay.

First, the most important thing to take into consideration when you are searching for a place is availability of good hospitals or private clinics. I think this is important because if someone becomes ill at any time one can go to a hospital and see a doctor. It's known that there are many hospitals and private clinics in the city more than in town. For example, Tripoli has many hospitals and hundreds private clinics. For people live in the city, it is easy to reach. People in town find it very difficult to drive a hundred and more kilometers to come to see a doctor. Therefore, city from this side is better.

The Second difference is education. Most towns have one or two schools only whereas in big cities, there are many schools. If I talk about university, most good universities are cities. Some people have to travel every day long distance to come to the university. This difference is also makes living in a big city better than living in a small town.

The last difference is social life. Social life in city is very bad. People don't see each other and they don't ask about each other. In town, social life is great. People love each other and help each other. They are like one family. This aspect of life is very important in people's life. I think it is very difficult to live alone. Therefore, this aspect makes living in a town better than a city.

Finally, I didn't discuss all the differences here. But, I think most people if have the choice they will choose to live in cities. This [V]because of good education and availability of hospitals. Regarding social life, people can go and visit their families and friend every week or month.

Essay 3 (a) first draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

Variant opinions are discussed about the differences between living in big cities and small towns, some people prefer living in a big city, where everything is close to your living place, whether daily requirements or working stations, whereas towns usually need you to drive for a long way.

People who live in the big cities do not have time to socialize or to do friendly activities, but small towns citizens perform different social activities daily. Big cities are preferred for their ease in transportation, but that costs the city a big loss, which is the fresh air found in smaller towns. This is why some people prefer towns.

Good job opportunities are more common in bigger cities. Also the good hospitals and schools are usually in cities. There's this big problem which the citizens of big cities always complain about, it is the traffic. Small towns have more comfortable methods of transportation because people can drive safely on the roads.

To conclude, people find the cities more comfortable, but they have to pay the price, so there are different opinions about living in a big city or a small town. I myself prefer to live in a big city.

Essay 4 (a) first draft

Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are differences between town and city. The town is better than The city because of many things. For example, the air and food are better. But city sometimes is good in other things for example scools and hospitals. I am going to write about these in the following.

First, living in town. Food is very healthy in town. There are many trees that make the air fresh and produce oxygen. People will not get ill because of the fresh air. But in the town, there is also negative side like there are not a lot of schools and universities.

Second, the living in the big city has advantages and disadvantages. Disadvantages like there are many factories which produce a lot of bad material that pollut air. But there are a lot of schools and universities which make education in city is better than twon. This is why I love living in city.

Finally, the big city and the town have both advantages and disadvantages. People can choose which one they like to live in. If you want good education so city is better. If you want fresh air and healthy food so town is better.

Essay 5 (a) first draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are a lot of differences between living in a big city or small town, and also there are advantages and disadvantages for living in each place. These differences include the way of living, the surrounding, habits, education and so on. This essay will include the differences between them.

First, living in a big city has advantages and disadvantages. In the big city, the air is not fresh. It includes a lot of diseases, it is dirty and there is a lot of traffic pollution. The surrounding is also not clean and the streets are always broken. There is a difficulty in living because everything is expensive there. There are a lot of entertainment places in big city to spend your time, also a lot of shops where you can buy all things you need. People in big city are not friendly. There is no connection between them. About the schools and hospitals in big city are very good and available.

Second, in small town, the life is very easy and simple. They have fresh air. But, there are no good entertainment places. There are no a lot of schools and hospitals. The surrounding is very clean. The streets are very clean. There is no pollution of traffic and public. People there are friendly and connected.

Finally, in every place there are advantages and disadvantages to live in. In my opinion, living in the big city is more comfortable and better than living in village or small town because of the availability of everything people need in their life.

Essay 6 (a) first draft

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many advantage and disadvantage in living in a big city or small town. In the following paragraph some of these advantages and disadvantages will be discussed such as hospitals, transport, and schools.

In general living in a big city maybe help you to find job and there are many schools and hospitals. But in a small town, there are no near hospitals or schools. In this case may be people well prefer living in a city more than town.

There are many reasons let city is the worst thing for some people. First of all, the traffic of the transport in the city, but it is in contrast of the town, the town hasn't this traffic. Second thing is the social life which it better in the town than in the city. The third thing which is cost of living, living in a city us more expensive than living in the town. There are many advantages in living in a city and a town and disadvantages in both or them.

Essay 7(a) first draft

Differences between living in a big city or a small town.

Do you think living in a big city is the same in a small town? The differences between These different places appear in each country. Thus There are differences between a big city and a small town which maybe clear in social life, cost of living and even employment opportunities.

The first difference I will discuss is social life. Some of the differences between the city and the town are related to social life as well as cost of living. In the city, everybody acts like he wants without think of others, so there is no good relationship between them. I think the neighbours do not visit each other because they have not a time for that. Whereas in the town, everybody looks for others, and he thinks for others, so there's a good relationship between them. Even the neighbours visit each other and help each other. Another difference is related to cost of living. As we know because of developments in the city it helps a price to increase. Everything in the city is more expensive than in the town. People live in the town help each other. So living in a big city costs you more and makes you alone in the same time.

There's another difference between city and town. If you research about a job, do you think you'll find it easily or quickly in city or town? If we look at this side, I mean employment opportunities, we'll notice it's more available in the city more than in the town. In the town you'll face difficulties to find the job because there aren't companies, shops, coffes, school etc that are found in the city. So living in the city gives you more chances to work that you may don't find them if you living in the town.

Lastly, as there are advantages to live in the big city, these are disadvantages. The most famous advantages are social life, living costs and work. That is all for living in the small town. Advantages and disadvantages of living in both places city and town and one should Consider these differences between them [run on sentence].

Essay 8(a) first draft

Living in a big city and a small town

There are many differences between The town and the city. Town is better than The city because The air of town is a cure and fresh, but The air of city is polluted.

In The big city there's many factories which produce a lot of bad material that pollut air, while The town there is a lot of trees which produce oxygen. But there is a lot of disadvantaged in town and advantages in The big city. In The town there are not a lot of schools but in The city there are many schools and The education of city is better than The town.

Finally, The big city and the town have both advantages and disadvantages.

Essay 9 (a) first draft

Differences between living a big city and small town

Living in a small town is better Than living in a big city, A small town is very quiet and peaceful but The big city is very crowded and noisy too. However, aire is polluted and it is difficult to breath in a big city. There are less traffic and people feel comfortable whereas in a big city. There are more traffic and people can't walk on road. On the other hand, living in a small town is dull because There's no big places to shop or to make fun. Therefore, Living in a big city is interesting because of shopping places, internet cafes, and fun game. finally, There are few resourses and not many good schools in small city but there are good resources of teaching and studies and students can join college.

Essay 10

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

Living in city and town differs in many aspects such as fresh air, shops and traffic. Sometimes, many people want to live in a big city because it has a lot of shops. And, others want to live in a small town, because the life in town is very easy and comfortable. In town, the air is very fresh. In city the air is polluted. It is polluted because there are a lot of cars and factories. Cities are very crowded and has a lot of traffic and noise. I think the small town is quite and clean. It is a good place for old people. But I think the big city best place for employment opportunities and transport and every place. But in the small town it is difficult to find transport in every place. Also I think a good school find in the big city and hospitals.

Control group (top 10)

Essay 11 (a) first draft

The difference between big city and a small town is big especially in social life and pollution.

First difference between living in a city and a town [SP] to discuss here is social life. Social life is very important for people as one can't live alone. In town [SP], social life is very important. People are very kind and friendly with each other. They help each other in occasions such as weddings and other occasions. On the other hand, in city, people are very busy. Even relatives don't see each other. If you don't have money, people [SP] will not help you. This is one of the main differences which I think lead some people to prefer living in town.

The second difference is pollution. In city, air is polluted because of the traffic. There are a lot of cars on the road. Each family has more than a car. In addition, there are lots of factories near the city which make the air more polluted. On the other hand, the air in town is very fresh and pure. There are not many paved roads and people don't like to drive there. There are a lot of trees which help to make the air fresh.

In conclusion, the two differences discussed in the previous paragraphs are very important. People should take social life and air pollution into consideration especially the last one 'air pollution'. The last difference affects health. Therefore, people should look at all the differences before choosing where to live.

Essay 12 (b) revised draft

The difference between Living in a city or a small town is really big. The differences are especially in social life and pollution. Each aspect will be discussed separately in the following paragraphs.

First difference between living in a city and a town to discuss here is social life. Social life is very important for people as one can't live alone. In town [SP], social life is very important. People are very kind and friendly with each other. They help each other in occasions such as weddings and other occasions. On the other hand, in city, people are very busy. Even relatives don't see each other. If you don't have money, people [SP] will not help you. This is one of the main differences which I think lead some people to prefer living in town.

The second difference is pollution. In city, air is polluted because of the traffic. There are lot of cars on the road. Each family has more than a car. In addition, there are lots of factories near the city which make the air more polluted. On the other hand, the air in town is very fresh and pure. There are not many paved roads and people don't like to drive there. There are a lot of trees which help to make the air fresh.

In conclusion, the two differences discussed in the previous paragraphs are very important. People should take social life and air pollution into consideration especially the last one 'air pollution'. The last difference affects health. Therefore, people should look at all the differences before choosing where to live.

Essay 13 (a) First draft

Differences between living in a big city or a small town.

People live in different places and in different ways, some in cities, some in towns and even villages. They live according to their situations, money and their relatives. Living in a city or a town has some good points and bad ones.

Some people like towns and enjoy it with their nature, the green plants and varieties of herbs and flowers, the fresh air and fairbreeze in morning. Some people prefer town that it is a safe place where they can live next their relatives and the good manners and behaviour of people, they are kind and friendly. On otherside, there are some negative things that we find in towns. The schools may not be good for teaching. Also the hospitals and clinics are not available or with low or bad medicine. Besides, people of towns don't have enough knowledge of what happen in world with the new discoveries and invents.

City has great advantages that attract you. The jobs in cities is almost in every where, shops, factories, teaching, run restaurants and building houses, schools etc. We can find good education for children. The hospitals, clinics and drugstores are always available and with good services. In addition, cities is full of new things as machines, medias, shops and a lot of new information and discoveries. The bad points about living cities is that it is sometimes you feel lonely, no one you can depend on. People in cities often are rude and cruel.

Finally, every place in a city or in a town has its good points and bad or negative points that suits people in both ways.

Appendix 23: Differences between students of both groups

Significant association

Results showed that, the p-value was higher than 0.05 at both cases they were 0.60 and 0.7 therefore, there is no statistical significant differences between groups.

Anova: Single Factor (between rates before)

SUMMARY

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
R-1	140	9477	67.69286	76.8906
R-2	140	9360	66.85714	163.9651
R-3	140	9530	68.07143	76.46968

ANOVA

<i>Source</i>	<i>of</i>					<i>F</i>
<i>Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>critical</i>
Between Groups	108.0905	2	54.04524	0.510945	0.600304	3.017357
Within Groups	44108.22	417	105.7751			
Total	44216.31	419				

Appendix 24: Correlation between the 3 raters

Results showed correlation coefficient (r) ranged between 0.58 and 0.98 which means there is a positive correlation between raters but it is not very strong. Rater 1 and 2 Correlate highly, rater 1 and 3 don't correlate highly and rater 2 and 3 don't correlate highly.

Correlation between Ratters (1-2 and 3)

Content-Before		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.98		
	Rater-3	0.78	0.77	

Content-After		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.97		
	Rater-3	0.73	0.73	

Vocabulary-Before		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.95		
	Rater-3	0.61	0.59	

Vocabulary-After		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.88		
	Rater-3	0.58	0.61	

Mechanics-Before		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.98		
	Rater-3	0.68	0.66	

Mechanics-After		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			

	Rater-2	0.97		
	Rater-3	0.76	0.74	

Organization-Before		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.95		
	Rater-3	0.68	0.67	

Organization-After		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.95		
	Rater-3	0.71	0.72	

Language Use –Before		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.93		
	Rater-3	0.78	0.8	

Language Use –After		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.94		
	Rater-3	0.77	0.79	

Total-Before		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.79		
	Rater-3	0.66	0.77	

Total-After		Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
	Rater-1			
	Rater-2	0.79		
	Rater-3	0.77	0.77	

Appendix 25: Writing topics that are taught in Libya

COMPOSITION - I

4 hours per week.

This course is designed mainly to acquaint students with the necessity fundamentals of writing by guiding them through ample practice to write their own compositions.

It focuses on writing good and clear sentences and then leads the student to the structure of the paragraph. Students are taught to write simple, direct and clear paragraphs through use of topic sentence and the supporting sentences. A brief introduction to the order of arranging a paragraph is given so that students learn how to arrange their paragraph using time order (description) or rank order (discussing) a topic

a. Grammatical items to be covered and practiced:

1. Simple present
2. Progressive present
3. Present perfect
4. Simple past
5. Past progressive
6. Past perfect
7. Future
8. Nouns and pronouns
9. Adjectives and adverbs
10. Prepositions and interjections
11. Conjunctions

b. Sentences:

1. Simple sentence
2. Complex sentence
3. Compound sentence
4. Compound complex sentence
5. Statement (Declarative)
6. Question (Interrogative)
7. Command (Imperative)
8. Exclamatory sentences



COMPOSITION II

4 hours per week

Composition II is a more advanced course where students are to be acquainted with the necessary techniques of paragraph writing and later with planning and writing a whole composition. Here, students ought to be taught how to apply what they have already studied in Composition I. In other words, students at this point ought to know how to join the well-punctuated and constructed sentences, they have already learned in composition I and Grammar I, into a basic unit of thought, namely a paragraph. Later in the course students will be able to join several well written paragraphs into a well coherent and organized composition of any sort.

Composition II will be the following topics:

1. Paragraph and Development:

- Thesis statement.
- Body
- Conclusion

2. Unit of a paragraph:

- Arrangement of sentences
- Transitions between sentences
- Contrast and comparison in paragraphing
- Cause and effect in paragraphing

3. Planning and writing a composition:

- Purpose
- Central idea
- Working plan
- Sentence outline
- Topic outline
- Paragraph outline
- Effective beginning and ending
- Practice



Advanced writing I

This course is designed for third and fourth years students of English . It is intended to achieve the following major objectives :

- To provide an understanding of the total writing process and to explain how that process can be used to communicate effectively in writing .
- To look at the difficulties that students often experience in writing . It examines the errors which are frequently made and gives practice in correcting them .
- To guide students through the acquisition of skills indispensable in developing writing proficiency and to teach them to write more perceptively .
- To introduce the basic techniques , tools and forms that lead to a successful writing .
- To practice various methods for developing ideas in single paragraphs and essays .
- To look at the organization and style of writing which is required for academic purposes .
- To help prepare students for writing assignments actually required for their life and career .
- To stress the writer-reader relationship , and writing as a practical craft .
- To make a detailed analysis of writing samples (by students and professionals) and to furnish students with the necessary techniques for analyzing their own as well as other's work .
- To achieve growth in both thinking and writing skills through the use of contemporary models of good writing or interesting topics .

In practice , this course intends to disclose the skills of accomplished writing through a logical step-by-step approach . It proceeds systematically from the syntax of the sentence , as the seat of trouble in language use , through the structure of the paragraph , and to the form of the essay . It begins with an introductory discussion of the basic techniques of writing-gathering information , forming generalization , organizing , paragraphing and basic elements of style . Then , it moves to more specialized techniques including methods of development and advanced principles of writing .

Among the aspects of writing to be covered in this course are the following :

- Words
- The sentence
- Developing sentence patterns
- Sharpening coordination and subordination
- Mechanics
- Grammar
- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Paragraphing
- paragraphs- types and topic sentences
- selection of details



Appendix 26: A sample of a hand written essay with scribbles from experimental group first draft

Differences between living in a big city or a small town

People live different spaces and in different ways, some in cities, some in towns and even in villages. ^{They like} ~~they live~~ according to their situations, money and their relatives. Living in a city or a town has some good points and bad points.

Some people like town and enjoy them with their nature; the green plants and the varieties of herbs and flowers, the ~~fresh~~ and fair breeze in morning. Some ^{fresh air} people prefer town that it is a safe place where they can live near relatives ^w who have good manners and behavior of people, they are kind and friendly. On the other side, there are ~~some~~ negative things that we find in towns. The schools may not be good enough for teaching. Also, the hospitals and clinics are not available or with ~~low~~ bad medicine. Besides, people in towns ~~do~~ not have enough knowledge what happens in world of new information discoveries and inventions.

City has great advantages that attract you. ^{Jobs in the city} ~~The jobs in cities are almost everywhere,~~ shops, factories, teaching, run restaurants and building houses, schools ... etc. We can find good education for children. The hospitals, clinics and drug stores are always available with good services. In addition, cities is full of new things as machines, media, shops and a lot of new informations and discoveries. The bad points about living cities that it is sometimes you feel lonely, no one you can depend on. People in cities often are rude and cruel.

Appendix 27: Samples of students' coded essays

A sample from the experimental group (bottom 10)	
Essay 1	First draft
<p style="text-align: center;">Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town</p> <p>There are many differences between city and <u>twon</u> (SP) and <u>The</u> (Cap) difference is very clear between us and <u>some of</u> (PN) <u>people likes</u> (SVA) living in city some <u>likes</u> (SVA) living in small town.</p> <p><u>For</u> (WF) the social life (Pun) people in city do not have social life every <u>bodey</u> (SP) <u>bazy</u> (SP) in <u>his</u> (PN) work and in <u>his</u> (PN) <u>family</u> (F) and <u>small</u> (PN) <u>twon</u> (Pun+SP) people <u>are</u> (WF) have social life, and every one <u>known</u> (VT) the others, (Pun) small <u>twon</u> (Pun) have fresh air whereas the big city is very crowded by cars and don't have <u>air fresh</u> (WO), the small <u>twon</u> (SP) is <u>quite</u> (SP) <u>during</u> (WF) the city is very noisy and <u>don't</u> (WF) <u>comfortabal</u> (SP) <u>in</u> (WF) for living, (Pun) <u>cost</u> (A) of living in big city is so expensive <u>during</u> (WF) the small <u>twon</u> the costs <u>is</u> (SVA; F) <u>some of</u> (WF; F) cheap and <u>some of</u> (WF; F) expensive and every one can <u>bought</u> (WF; R). You can get work in big city <u>essily</u> (SP) because the chances of <u>working more</u> (F) but in small <u>twon</u> (Pun) <u>from difficult find the work</u> (F; A). In the city (Pun) the education <u>is very advancing</u> (WF) and there are many schools in the city, <u>during</u> (WF) the small <u>twon</u> don't (SVA) have many school (P) and teacher (P) and education is difficult for the student. <u>During</u> (WF) <u>your</u> (F) in city and <u>wanting</u> (VT) to <u>travelling</u> (WF) from place to place (Pun) you can find <u>many transport</u> (WF) like taxi, train (Pun) <u>during</u> (WF; R) the small <u>your</u> (WF) difficult finding transport (F). Finally (Pun) I can say there are many advantages and <u>disadvantage</u> (P) in city and <u>twon</u> (SP) and for me (Pun) I like living in the big city because <u>you</u> (PN) can get <u>any thing</u> (WF) <u>wanting</u> (WF) and <u>every thing</u> (WF) <u>invisible</u> (F).</p>	

Differences between Living in a Big City and a Small Town

There are many differences between city and town and the difference is very clear between us and (Pun) some of (PN) people like living in city and some like living in small town. In this essay, I am going to explain some of these differences such as social life, fresh air, cost of living, job opportunities, education and transportation.

For the social life (Pun) people in city do not have social life (R) evebody (SP; F) busy in his (PN) work and in (PN) his family and (PN) small town people are (VT) have social life, and every one known (VT; Pun) the others, (Pun) small town has fresh air whereas the (A) big city is very crowded by cars and doesn't have fresh air, (Pun) the small town is quite (SP) while the city is very noisy and don't (SVA) comfortabal (SP) in (WF) for living, (Pun; R) cost of living in big city is so expensive while (PN) the small town the cost is some of (WF; F) cheap and some of (WF; F) expensive and every one (WF) can bought (WF). You can get work in big city easily because the chances of working (F) more but in small town from (WF) difficult find the (A) work (F). Also, in the city the education is very advancing (WF) and there are many schools in the city, while the small towns don't have many schools and teachers and education is difficult for the student. In addition, while you're in city and wanting (VT) to travelling (WF) from place to place you can find many transport (WF) like taxi, train while (PN) the small you're (WF) difficult (Pun) finding (WF) transport. Finally, I can say there are many advantage (P) and disadvantage (P) in city and town (SS). And for me I like living in the big city because you (WF) can get anything wanting (WF) and everything invisible (F). I wish everyone are (SVA) happy where you (WF; PN) live.

1- Content

Types of introduction	Before revision	After revision
Clear Introduction		√
Unclear introduction (a) One or two introductory sentences with repetition of the words of the title	√	
Unclear introduction type 2 (b) misleading		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrb.
Word	√			
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence	√			
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrb. Distribution

Type of revision to introduction			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	Surface & meaning
			√

Body paragraph	Before revision	After revision
One sentence body paragraph		
Body paragraph with underdeveloped ideas	√	√
Developed body paragraph		

Type of revision to body paragraph			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
	√		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrb.
Word	√			
Phrase			√	
Clause			√	
Sentence	√			

Paragraph				
Transitions	√			

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib, Distribution

Conclusion	Before revision	After revision
No conclusion		
Unclear conclusion	√	
Clear conclusion		√

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli	Distrib.
Word	√			
Phrase				
Clause				√
Sentence	√			
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib, Distribution

Type of revision to conclusion			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
	√		

2- Organisation

Physical structure of an essay	Before revision	After revision
Structure (1) writing consisting of three paragraphs or more.		
Structure (2) & (3) writing consisted of one or two paragraphs only	√	√

Revision to structure	
No revision	
Consolidation	√
Distribution	
Addition	

Idea organisation	Before revision	After revision
Each paragraph contains different ideas	√	√
Each paragraph contains one main idea		

Transitions	Before revision	After revision
All transitions used were accurate		
Transitions used but more than one transition is inaccurate		√
No transitions used	√	

Revision to transition	
Addition	√
Deletion	
Substitution	√

Please write the number of transitions revised there is more than one

3- Mechanical and grammatical mistakes included in the SA sheet

Mistakes in grammar and mechanics as stated in the SA sheet	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Spelling	SP	9	3
Capitalisation	Cap	1	0
Punctuation	Pun	11	7
Subject verb agreement	SVA	4	2
Consistent verb tense	VT	2	3
Word order	WO	1	0

Other grammatical mistakes

Please add any other grammatical issues e.g. problems with sentence	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Wrong form	WF	19	13
Sentence structure	SS	0	1
Article	A	2	2
Pronoun	PN	5	7
Plural	P	3	2
Run on	R	2	2
Fragment	F	9	5

The difference between Living (CAP) in a city or a small town is really big. The differences are especially in social life and pollution. Each aspect will be discussed separately in the following paragraphs.

(A) First difference between living in a city and a town to discuss here is social life. Social life is very important for people as one can't live alone. In town, social life is very important. People are very kind and friendly with each other. They help each other in occasions such as weddings and other occasions. On the other hand, in city, people are very busy. Even relatives don't see each other. If you don't have money, people will not help you. This is one of the main differences which I think lead some people to prefer living in town.

The second difference is pollution. In city, (A) air is polluted because of the traffic. There are lot (SP) of cars on the road. Each family has more than a car. In addition, there are lots of factories near the city which make the air more polluted. On the other hand, the air in town is very fresh and pure. There are not many paved roads (Pun) and people don't like to drive there. There are a lot of trees which help to make the air fresh.

In conclusion, the two differences discussed in the previous paragraphs are very important. People should take social life and air pollution into consideration especially the last one which is air pollution. The last difference affects health. Therefore, people should look at all the differences before choosing where to live.

Addition =

Consolidation =

Distribution =

Substitution of transition =

4- Content

Types of introduction	Before revision	After revision
Clear Introduction	√	√
Unclear introduction (a) One or two introductory sentences with repetition of the words of the title		
Unclear introduction type 2 (b) misleading		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrib.
Word	√			
Phrase				√
Clause				
Sentence	√			
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Type of revision to introduction			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	Surface & meaning
	√		

Body paragraph	Before revision	After revision
One sentence body paragraph		
Body paragraph with underdeveloped ideas		
Developed body paragraph	√	√

Type of revision to body paragraph			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
√			

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrb.
Word				
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrb. Distribution

Conclusion	Before revision	After revision
No conclusion		
Unclear conclusion		
Clear conclusion	√	√

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrb.
Word	√			
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrb. Distribution

Type of revision to conclusion			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
	√		

5- Organisation

Physical structure of an essay	Before revision	After revision
Structure (1) writing consisting of three paragraphs or more.	√	√
Structure (2) & (3) writing consisted of one or two paragraphs only		

Revision to structure	
No revision	
Consolidation	
Distribution	√
Addition	√

Idea organisation	Before revision	After revision
Each paragraph contains different ideas		
Each paragraph contains one main idea	√	√

Transitions	Before revision	After revision
All transitions used were accurate	√	√
Transitions used but more than one transition is inaccurate		
No transitions used		

Revision to transition	
Addition	
Deletion	
Substitution	

Please write the number of transitions revised there is more than one

6- Mechanical and grammatical mistakes included in the SA sheet

Mistakes in grammar and mechanics as stated in the SA sheet	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Spelling	SP	4	1
Capitalisation	Cap	0	1
Punctuation	Pun	3	1
Subject verb agreement	SVA	0	0
Consistent verb tense	VT	WO0	0
Word order	WO	0	0

Other grammatical mistakes

Please add any other grammatical issues e.g. problems with sentence	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Wrong form	WF	0	0
Sentence structure	SS	0	0
Article	A	3	2
Pronoun	PN	0	0
Plural	P	0	0
Run on	R	0	0
Fragment	F	0	0

A sample from the experimental group (bottom 10)

Essay 3

First Draft

There are a lot of differences between living in a big city or a small town.

First, In (Cap) a small town (Pun) the best think (SP) that a fresh air (F) (R) moreover in the big city (Pun) because (WF) there many ereed (SP) (F) and the air is politic (SP). In the big town (Pun) we have many kinde (SP) of traffic in contrast in a small town (SS) (R) (Pun) but the big twon is the batter (SP) because it comes (SP) in the cienter (SP). The big town has a lot of good thinks (SP) (Pun) in contrast (WF) in a small town (SS) (Pun) also many people prefer to go to a big town for interesting himselfes (SP) (WF) (R). In the (A) small town (Pun) we can live in cofortable (WF) (SP) (Pun) also the best thing that find (WF) (F) it in a big town that (WF) (F) employment opportunities (Pun) but in (A) small town its (SP) less than a big town (Pun) and (A) cost of living (Pun) but (A) small town its (SP) less it is a (WF) nice when you living (VT) (F) in a big town (Pun) but in (WF) the same time (WF) it's better a small town (R). I know the (A) big city is the better (WF+ Pun) but I prefer a small town.

Essay 3

Revised draft

There are a lot of differences between living in a big city or a small town. **Some of these differences are discussed below.**

Firstly, in the big town (Pun) because there many cars and traffic (Pun) the air is polluted (F)(R). **There are a lot of good things like good schools and hospitals and taxis.** Employment opportunity is one of (A) good thing (P) about big town (P). People prefer to live in a big town. **Secondly**, in the (A) small town (Pun) the best thing is fresh air. (A) Cost of living is less than (A) big town (SS). **Fruits and vegetables are very fresh.** People prefer to live in a small town.

At the end, I know the (A) big city is the better (Pun) but I prefer a small town. **Anyone can choose where to live if has (SVA) the ability.**

Addition =

Consolidation =

Distribution

Substitution of transition = First > Firstly

1- Content

Types of introduction	Before revision	After revision
Clear Introduction		
Unclear introduction (a) One or two introductory sentences with repetition of the words of the title	√	√
Unclear introduction type 2 (b) misleading		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrib.
Word				
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence	√			
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Type of revision to introduction			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	Surface & meaning
	√		

Body paragraph	Before revision	After revision
One sentence body paragraph		
Body paragraph with underdeveloped ideas	√	√
Developed body paragraph		

Type of revision to body paragraph			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
			√

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrib.
Word	√	√		
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence	√	√		
Paragraph				
Transitions	√	√		

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Conclusion	Before revision	After revision
No conclusion		
Unclear conclusion	√	
Clear conclusion		√

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrb.
Word				
Phrase	√			
Clause				
Sentence	√			
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib, Distribution

Type of revision to conclusion			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
			√

2- Organisation

Physical structure of an essay	Before revision	After revision
Structure (1) writing consisting of three paragraphs or more.		√
Structure (2) & (3) writing consisted of one or two paragraphs only	√	

Revision to structure	
No revision	
Consolidation	√
Distribution	√
Addition	√

Idea organisation	Before revision	After revision
Each paragraph contains different ideas	√	√
Each paragraph contains one main idea		

Transitions	Before revision	After revision
All transitions used were accurate		
Transitions used but more than one transition is inaccurate	√	√
No transitions used		

Revision to transition	
Addition	2
Deletion	6
Substitution	1

Please write the number of transitions revised there is more than one

Addition: Secondly, at the end

Deletion: moreover, in contrast, in contrast, also, but, but in the same time

Substitution: first > firstly

3- Mechanical and grammatical mistakes included in the SA sheet

Mistakes in grammar and mechanics as stated in the SA sheet	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Spelling	SP	12	0
Capitalisation	Cap	1	0
Punctuation	Pun	13	4
Subject verb agreement	SVA	0	1
Consistent verb tense	VT	1	0
Word order	WO	0	0

Other grammatical mistakes

Please add any other grammatical issues e.g. problems with sentence	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Wrong form	WF	9	0
Sentence structure	SS	2	1
Article	A	4	5
Pronoun	PN	0	0
Plural	P	0	2
Run on	R	4	1
Fragment	F	5	1

A sample from the experimental group (Top10)	
Essay 4	First Draft
<p>There are many differences between <u>the</u> (A) life in a city and <u>the</u> (A) life in the town. Living in town is good and sometimes bad. Living in city is the same. I know the difference between the two <u>palces</u> (SP) because I lived in the two. The difference is in <u>everything</u> (Pun) in food, social life, traffic and education.</p> <p>Both places (Pun) city and town (Pun) have differences between them. The first difference is in food. Because I lived in (A) <u>town</u> <u>alot</u> (SP), I know the difference in food. In town (Pun) the food is much <u>helthire</u> (SP). People grow the food from natural material. Even meat is better in town because animlas (SP) are free to eat from the farm. No <u>Kemicals</u> (SP) are added to the food. In city (Pun) food is <u>no</u> (WF) natural. A lot of <u>kemicals</u> (SP)(F) (Pun) and people usually buy ready food. That is the first difference. The second one is social life. <u>Social life in town is very nice people see each other at any time</u> (R). People are friendly and <u>yu</u> (SP) can <u>communicat</u> (SP) with anybody. In city (Pun) people donot (SP) have time to speak to each other. They are very busy. <u>There is</u> (SVA) also <u>another</u> (WF) two differences between the two places in traffic and education. Traffic is very bad in town and not in city. You take a long time to reach your place. (A) Final difference is education. I think <u>the</u> (WF) is (A) only positive thing about living in a city. <u>Thare</u> (SP) are a lot of schools.</p> <p>Finally, I want to say that this is what I think <u>is</u> (SVA) the <u>the</u> (A) differences between (A) two places. Food, social life, traffic and education (F). I lived in the two places. I think <u>its</u> (SP) (A) nice experyance (SP). But I really like (A) town.</p>	

Essay 4**Revised Draft**

There are many differences between the (A) life in a city and the (A) life in the (A) town. Living in town has its advantages and disadvantages. Living in city is the same. I can tell the differences between the two places in details (WF) because I experienced living in both. From my own experience (Pun) I can say that the differences are in everything especially in food, social life, traffic and education.

Both places (Pun) city and town (Pun) have differences between them. The first difference is in food. Because I lived in (A) town a lot, I know the difference in food. In town, the food is much healthier. People grow the food from natural material. Even meat is better in town because animals are free to eat from the farm. No chemicals are added to the food. In city, food is not natural. A lot of chemicals (F) and people usually buy ready food. That is the first difference. The second one is social life. Social life in town is very nice people see each other at any time (R). People are friendly and you can communicate with anybody. In city, people do not have time to speak to each other. They are very busy. There are also another (WF) two differences between the two places in traffic and education. Traffic is very bad in city and not in town. You take a long time to reach your place. (A) Final difference is education. I think that is (A) only positive thing about living in a city. There are a lot of schools. Also there are a lot of universities. Usually in towns (Pun) there is one university or sometimes you do not find any one (WF). In town_(Pun) there are only schools. This is why people go to city for university education.

In conclusion, I want to say that this is what I think is (SVA) the differences between (A) two place (P). Food, social life, traffic and education (F). I lived in the two places. I think its (SP) (A) nice experience. But I really like (A) town.

Addition =

Consolidation =

Distribution =

Substitution of transition =

4- Content

Types of introduction	Before revision	After revision
Clear Introduction	√	√
Unclear introduction (a) One or two introductory sentences with repetition of the words of the title		
Unclear introduction type 2 (b) misleading		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrb.
Word	√			
Phrase	√		√	
Clause	√			
Sentence	√			
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrb. Distribution

Type of revision to introduction			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	Surface & meaning
	√		

Body paragraph	Before revision	After revision
One sentence body paragraph		
Body paragraph with underdeveloped ideas		
Developed body paragraph	√	√

Type of revision to body paragraph			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
			√

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrb.
Word	√			√
Phrase	√			
Clause				

Sentence	√			
Paragraph				
Transitions				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Conclusion	Before revision	After revision
No conclusion		
Unclear conclusion		
Clear conclusion	√	√

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrib.
Word				
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Type of revision to conclusion			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
	√		

5- Organisation

Physical structure of an essay	Before revision	After revision
Structure (1) writing consisting of three paragraphs or more.	√	√
Structure (2) & (3) writing consisted of one or two paragraphs only		

Revision to structure	
No revision	
consolidation	
distribution	√
Addition	√

Idea organisation	Before revision	After revision
Each paragraph contains different ideas	√	√
Each paragraph contains one main idea		

Transitions	Before revision	After revision
All transitions used were accurate	√	√
Transitions used but more than one transition is inaccurate		
No transitions used		

Revision to transition	
Addition	0
Deletion	0
Substitution	1

Please write the number of transitions revised there is more than one

Addition:

Substitution: Finally> In conclusion

6- Mechanical and grammatical mistakes included in the SA sheet

Mistakes in grammar and mechanics as stated in the SA sheet	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Spelling	SP	12	1
Capitalisation	Cap	0	0
Punctuation	Pun	7	5
Subject verb agreement	SVA	2	1
Consistent verb tense	VT	0	0
Word order	WO	0	0

Other grammatical mistakes

Please add any other grammatical issues e.g. problems with sentence	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Wrong form	WF	3	3
Sentence structure	SS	0	0
Article	A	9	9
Pronoun	PN	2	1

Plural	P	0	1
Run on	R	1	1
Fragment	F	2	2

A sample from the experimental group (top 10)

Essay 5

First Draft

This essay shall discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both living in a big city and living in a small town. After reading it (Pun) you shall be able to dicide (SP) wheather (SP) you want to live in a city or town.

The first thing to discuss is social life. There are a lot of differences in the style of life of peple (SP) who live in these places. In my opinion, people in twon (SP) are more friendly and kind (WF). They ask about each other and help each other in every occasjen (SP). On the other hand, people in city are not very friendly. They are always busy with their life.

In town, (A) air is very fresh and clean. In town, there is (SVA) a lot of trees and farms. In city, the air there (WF) is very polluted because of the traffic. Also (Pun) smoke from factories makes the air very unhealthy. This makes people ill and children have azma (SP).

The cost of living is another difference. Living in town is much cheaper than living in a city. People spend more in city because they have more facilities. Also, people in city have to pay very expensive rents for their houses. Many people in cities struggle to get money to pay for their basic needs. In twon (SP), even if you don't have money, people usually help you to get your basic needs.

Education and hospitals are more in City (Cap) (SS). In twon (SP), there are not many schools and people sometimes have to drive for a long time. Some families have children who study in the morning and children (PN) study in the afternoon. These people then have to drive four times a day. On the other hand, in city (Pun) there a lot of schools (F) and you can walk (PN) them. The other thing in twon (SP) is that there are not hospitals. And if there is a hospital, it does not have matrial (SP) or doctors.

In city, there is (SVA) a lot of job opportunities. I think this is another advantage of living in (A) city. In towns, there are not many shops, schools, offices and hospitals. So

(Pun) people in this case prefer to go to city (P) to get better jobs.

Lastly, both places have advantages and disadvantages. As I wrote in the above paragraphs (Pun) the difference (P) are in social life, fresh air, costs of living, education, hospitals and job opportunities. People have to think before taking decision (P) to see what is important for their lives. For me (Pun) for example, I prefer city (P).

Essay 5

Revised Draft

There are many differences between the lifestyles of people that live in a city and people that live in a town. This essay will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both living in a big city and living in a small town. After reading it (Pun) you may have more information on what it is like to live in both places and be able to decide whether you prefer to live in a city or town. The advantages and disadvantages I shall discuss regarding social life, fresh air, living costs, education, hospitals and job opportunities (F).

The first thing to discuss is social life. There are a lot of differences in the style of life of people who live in these places. In my opinion, people in town are more friendly and kind (WF). They ask about each other and help each other in every occasion. On the other hand, people in city are not very friendly. They are always busy with their life.

Secondly, in town, (A) air is very fresh and clean. In town, there is (SVA) a lot of trees and farms. In city, the air there (WF) is very polluted because of the traffic. Also (Pun) smoke from factories makes the air very unhealthy. This makes people ill and children have asthma.

Thirdly, the cost of living is another difference. Living in town is much cheaper than living in a city. People spend more in city because they have more facilities. Also, people in city have to pay very expensive rents for their houses. Many people in cities struggle to get money to pay for their basic needs. In town, even if you don't have money, people usually help you to get your basic needs.

Fourth, education and hospitals are more in City (Cap) (SS). In town, there are not many schools and people sometimes have to drive for a long time. Some families have children who study in the morning and children (PN) study in the afternoon. These people then have to drive four times a day. On the other hand, in city there a lot of schools (F) and you can

walk to them. The other thing in town (SP) is that there are not hospitals. And if there is a hospital, it does not have material or doctors.

Lastly, in city, there are a lot of job opportunities. I think this is another advantage of living in (A) city. In towns, there are not many shops, schools, offices and hospitals. So (Pun) people in this case prefer to go to city (P) to get better jobs.

In summary, both places have advantages and disadvantages. As I wrote in the above paragraphs (Pun) the difference are (SVA) in social life, fresh air, costs of living, education, hospitals and job opportunities. People have to think before taking decision (P) to see what is important for their lives. For me (Pun) for example, I prefer city (P).

Addition =

Consolidation =

Distribution =

Substitution of transition =

Content

Types of introduction	Before revision	After revision
Clear Introduction		√
Unclear introduction (a) One or two introductory sentences with repetition of the words of the title	√	
Unclear introduction type 2 (b) misleading		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrb.
Word				
Phrase				

Clause	√			
Sentence	√			
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Type of revision to introduction			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	Surface & meaning
			√

Body paragraph	Before revision	After revision
One sentence body paragraph		
Body paragraph with underdeveloped ideas		
Developed body paragraph	√	√

Type of revision to body paragraph			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
	√		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consil.	Distrib.
Word	√			
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				
Transitions	√			

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Conclusion	Before revision	After revision
No conclusion		
Unclear conclusion		
Clear conclusion	√	√

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli	Distrib.
Word				
Phrase	√			
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Type of revision to conclusion			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
	√		

7- Organisation

Physical structure of an essay	Before revision	After revision
Structure (1) writing consisting of three paragraphs or more.	√	√
Structure (2) & (3) writing consisted of one or two paragraphs only		

Revision to structure	
No revision	
Consolidation	√
distribution	
Addition	√

Idea organisation	Before revision	After revision
Each paragraph contains different ideas	√	√
Each paragraph contains one main idea		

Transitions	Before revision	After revision
All transitions used were accurate	√	√
Transitions used but more than one transition is inaccurate		
No transitions used		

Revision to transition	
Addition	4
Deletion	0
Substitution	1

Please write the number of transitions revised there is more than one

Addition: Secondly, thirdly, fourth, lastly

Substitution: Lastly > In summary.

8- Mechanical and grammatical mistakes included in the SA sheet

Mistakes in grammar and mechanics as stated in the SA sheet	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Spelling	SP	10	1
Capitalisation	Cap	1	1
Punctuation	Pun	6	5
Subject verb agreement	SVA	2	2
Consistent verb tense	VT	0	0
Word order	WO	0	0

Other grammatical mistakes

Please add any other grammatical issues e.g. problems with sentence	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Wrong form	WF	2	2
Sentence structure	SS	1	1
Article	A	2	2
Pronoun	PN	2	1
Plural	P	4	3
Run on	R	0	0
Fragment	F	1	2

A sample from the control group (bottom 10)

Essay 6

First draft

Difference between living in a big city and small town

There are many differences between living in a big city and a small town. The (A) social life in the city is bad. the (Cap + A) people are not firndly (SP). The city is very crowded. In the small town, the (A) people known (VT) each other. Fresh air is in town and clean (SS). The air in the city is dirty. The traffic in the big city find many cars (SS) while, (Pun) in the (A) a small town is rare (F). The big city many schools (F), but the small town (P) don't (SVA) good schools (F) because there are not (WF) teachers. The hospitals are not small towns (SS) because don't have many doctors (F) but in a big city (Pun) the hospitals very good (F) because they have several doctors.

Essay 6

Revised Draft

There are many differences between living in a big city and a small town. The (A) social life in the city is bad. the (A+ Cap) people are not firndly (SP). The city is very crowded. In the small town, the (A) people known (VT) each other. Fresh air is in town and clean (SS). The air in the city is dirty. The traffic in the big city find many cars (SS) while, (Pun) in the (A) a small town is rare (F). The big city many schools (F), but the small town (P) don't (SVA) good schools (F) because there are not (WF) teachers. The hospitals are not small towns (SS) because don't have many doctors (F) but in a big city (Pun) the hospitals very good (F) because they have several doctors.

Addition =**Consolidation =****Distribution =****Substitution of transition =**

9- Content

Types of introduction	Before revision	After revision
Clear Introduction		
Unclear introduction (a) One or two introductory sentences with repetition of the words of the title	√	√
Unclear introduction type 2 (b) misleading		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrib.
Word				
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Type of revision to introduction			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	Surface & meaning
√			

Body paragraph	Before revision	After revision
One sentence body paragraph		
Body paragraph with underdeveloped ideas	√	√
Developed body paragraph		

Type of revision to body paragraph			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
	√		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrib.
Word	√			√
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				
Transitions				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Conclusion	Before revision	After revision
No conclusion	√	√
Unclear conclusion		
Clear conclusion		

Level	Add.	Dele.	Consoli.	Distrib.
Word				
Phrase				
Clause				
Sentence				
Paragraph				

Key: add. Addition, Dele. Delete, Consoli. Consolidation, Distrib. Distribution

Type of revision to conclusion			
No revision	surface only	meaning only	surface& meaning
√			

10- Organisation

Physical structure of an essay	Before revision	After revision
Structure (1) writing consisting of three paragraphs or more.		
Structure (2) & (3) writing consisted of one or two paragraphs only	√	√

Revision to structure	
No revision	
Consolidation	
Distribution	
Addition	√

Idea organisation	Before revision	After revision
Each paragraph contains different ideas	√	√
Each paragraph contains one main idea		

Transitions	Before revision	After revision
All transitions used were accurate	√	√

Transitions used but more than one transition is inaccurate		
No transitions used		

Revision to transition	
Addition	0
Deletion	0
Substitution	0

Please write the number of transitions revised there is more than one

Addition:

Substitution:

11- Mechanical and grammatical mistakes included in the SA sheet

Mistakes in grammar and mechanics as stated in the SA sheet	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Spelling	SP	1	1
Capitalisation	Cap	1	1
Punctuation	Pun	2	2
Subject verb agreement	SVA	1	1
Consistent verb tense	VT	1	1
Word order	WO	0	0

Other grammatical mistakes

Please add any other grammatical issues e.g. problems with sentence	Code (letters)	Number of mistakes	
		Before revision	After revision
Wrong form	WF	1	1
Sentence structure	SS	3	3
Article	A	3	3
Pronoun	PN	0	0
Plural	P	1	1

Run on	R	0	0
Fragment	F	5	5

Appendix 28: Samples of the essays rating by the three raters

Key code

Implausible
results from
experimental
group

B: Before revision
A: After revision

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	25	25	16	17	17	18	18	18	4	4	80	81
Rater 2	25	25	17	17	16	17	18	19	4	4	80	82
Rater 3	26	26	17	17	16	17	19	19	4	4	82	83

2

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	21	21	18	17	13	14	16	17	3	4	71	73
Rater 2	21	22	17	17	13	14	15	16	3	4	69	73
Rater 3	22	22	16	17	13	14	15	16	3	4	69	73

3

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	21	26	15	17	15	17	18	21	4	4	73	85
Rater 2	20	26	14	17	15	17	18	20	4	4	72	84
Rater 3	21	26	15	16	14	17	18	20	4	4	72	83

4

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A

Rater 1	21	25	16	18	14	18	18	24	3	5	72	90
Rater 2	22	24	16	18	14	15	18	21	3	5	73	83
Rater 3	21	25	16	18	14	17	18	24	3	5	72	89

5

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	22	23	16	17	14	15	16	21	3	4	71	80
Rater 2	22	23	16	18	14	14	16	20	3	4	71	79
Rater 3	21	23	16	18	14	15	17	18	3	4	71	78

6

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	27	28	18	19	16	17	17	17	3	3	81	85
Rater 2	27	27	18	18	15	17	16	17	3	4	79	83
Rater 3	27	28	18	19	16	17	17	17	3	4	81	85

7

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	20	22	14	16	14	15	15	16	3	4	66	73
Rater 2	20	21	14	16	12	13	15	17	3	4	64	71
Rater 3	20	21	14	16	12	13	15	17	3	4	64	71

8

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	17	17	10	10	15	14	12	14	2	3	54	58
Rater 2	18	18	10	11	15	15	12	14	2	3	57	61
Rater 3	17	18	10	10	15	16	11	13	2	3	55	60

9

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	22	24	15	17	14	16	18	19	3	4	72	80
Rater 2	21	22	15	16	13	14	18	19	3	4	70	74
Rater 3	20	21	15	17	14	15	18	19	3	4	70	76

10

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	21	23	16	18	14	17	15	17	3	3	67	78
Rater 2	22	23	16	17	15	16	15	17	3	3	71	76
Rater 3	22	24	14	16	15	17	15	17	3	3	69	77

11

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	17	17	12	13	15	17	15	17	3	3	62	67
Rater 2	17	17	10	11	15	16	15	16	3	3	60	63
Rater 3	17	17	11	12	14	16	16	17	3	3	61	65

12

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	23	27	16	19	14	18	18	23	4	5	75	92
Rater 2	23	26	16	19	14	18	18	21	4	5	75	89
Rater 3	23	26	17	19	14	17	18	21	4	5	76	88

13

Rater	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Language Use		Mechanics		Total	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Rater 1	17	17	12	11	15	15	15	16	3	3	62	62
Rater 2	17	16	12	10	15	16	16	15	3	3	63	60
Rater 3	17	17	11	12	14	14	16	17	3	3	61	63

Appendix 29: Average and rank of experiment group and control group (pre-test)

No.	Average	No.	Average
1	91.3	1	90.3
2	88.5	2	90.0
3	88.0	3	89.7
4	86.7	4	88.5
5	85.7	5	88.3
6	83.3	6	88.0
7	82.0	7	88.0
8	80.7	8	84.3
9	80.3	9	82.7
10	80.0	10	82.0
11	78.0	11	80.3
12	77.3	12	79.7
13	77.3	13	78.3
14	76.3	14	78.3
15	76.3	15	77.7
16	76.0	16	77.3
17	75.3	17	76.3
18	74.3	18	76.0
19	74.3	19	75.0
20	74.3	20	74.3
21	74.0	21	74.3
22	73.0	22	74.3
23	73.0	23	74.0
24	72.3	24	73.0
25	72.3	25	73.0
26	72.3	26	71.7
27	71.7	27	71.0
28	71.0	28	70.7
29	71.0	29	70.5
30	70.7	30	70.0
31	70.7	31	69.7
32	70.0	32	69.3
33	69.7	33	69.3
34	69.3	34	69.0
35	69.3	35	69.0
36	69.0	36	69.0
37	69.0	37	68.3
38	68.5	38	67.7
39	68.3	39	67.7
40	67.7	40	67.7

41	66.3	41	67.3
42	65.7	42	66.3
43	65.3	43	65.7
44	65.0	44	65.7
45	65.0	45	65.3
46	64.7	46	65.0
47	64.7	47	65.0
48	64.3	48	64.7
49	64.0	49	64.7
50	63.3	50	62.7
51	62.7	51	62.7
52	62.0	52	59.0
53	61.7	53	60.7
54	61.3	54	60.3
55	61.3	55	60.3
56	61.0	56	60.0
57	61.0	57	59.9
58	60.7	58	59.7
59	60.3	59	59.5
60	60.3	60	59.3
61	59.7	61	58.7
62	59.0	62	57.0
63	55.3	63	57.0
64	53.0	64	55.3
65	51.3	65	53.0
66	51.0	66	50.7
67	49.0	67	50.3
68	45.7	68	49.0
69	44.3	69	45.3
70	44.0	70	44.3

Appendix 30: Raters' teaching background information

Rater 1:

He has a BA in English language teaching from the University of Birmingham (College of Education). MA in TESOL from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He also had a PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Nottingham (SLA and Motivation). He has over 9 years experience in teaching English to various students levels and populations. He has taught English for business, English grammar and structure and English for general and academic purposes. He worked as EFL instructor in London School of Business & Finance for 3 years and 5 months. Research Assistant at General Teaching Council for England.

Rater 2:

She has a BA in Liberal Arts & Sciences, an MA in Critical Discourse, Culture and Communication and she has studied Rhetoric at the University of California Berkeley. She has also been teaching EFL online for 2 years, she has taught business communication for two years. She taught EFL in a business college's School of English for one summer and she taught on the BME (Business Management English) which is an English pre-session course at the University of Birmingham.

Rater 3:

She works at School of Arts, Languages and cultures University of Manchester. Currently, she has a PhD in interpreting and translation. She works as a lecturer at the same University. She taught Academic Writing to university students in Syria for 3 years.

Appendix 31: Procedures & instructions for pre study writing for both groups

a- Procedures

Before handing in the writing papers:

Script:

- 1- Teacher and researcher: Good morning.
- 2- Teacher: kindly be seated. Please listen carefully to the following announcements.
- 3- Teacher: today, you will be given a topic to write about.
- 4- Teacher: you will have 35 minutes to finish your writing. The starting and finishing time will be written on the board.
- 5- Teacher: you will be writing your paragraph on the sheet which will be provided.
- 6- Researcher: I distributed the papers to the students.
- 7- Teacher: kindly asked students not to speak during the test.
- 8- Teacher announced the end of the test.
- 9- Researcher collected the papers.
- 10- Researcher thanked students.

b- Instructions for pre study writing for both groups

Name:
minutes

Time allocated: 35

Score:

Directions: Write a paragraph of at least 150 words on the following prompt.

Discuss the effects of smoking on people's health

[illegible]